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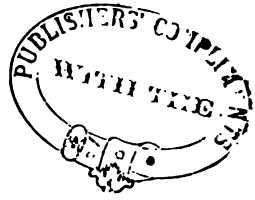
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Class Number







CAROLINE VON LINSINGEN.

CAROLINE VON LINSINGEN

//

AND

KING WILLIAM THE FOURTH.

UNPUBLISHED LOVE-LETTERS DISCOVERED
AMONG THE LITERARY REMAINS OF
BARON REICHENBACH.

*Translated, with the German Editor's Introduction and
Baron Reichenbach's Account of the Letters,*

BY

THEOPHILUS G. ARUNDEL.

London :

W. SWAN SONNENSCHN & ALLEN,
PATERNOSTER SQUARE.

1880.

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.



SOME words in substantial explanation may be looked for from a translator of letters so singular as are those in this book. Yet, so far, I can offer nothing beyond an apology and this a personal one. It is, that I cannot pretend to appear as their editor. I do not champion their genuineness, do not vouch for their truth; to such a task indeed the sound conviction brought by strenuous research is absolutely wanting. I can only put them before Englishmen in the English tongue just as they stand, with all the arguments used by Baron Reichenbach and the German editor in their support. No note of assent or dissent shall be added by me. It will be for others to develop or to destroy what germ of truth may seem

to underlie the whole romance. Many will observe how both Reichenbach and the other editor are chiefly at pains to set forth its sentiment and its poetry, while as an unwritten page of history they give it less regard. We Britons, however, may be less drawn to the romantic side of the story; it is as an actual episode in the life of one of our own sovereigns that it will gain our interest. Although there is no doubt that the tale needs abundant verification in order to establish its truth, yet at the outset one cannot wisely set it aside as false. In Germany it has met with very general belief; and the fact alone that a great and respected firm of Leipzig publishers should have first chosen to give it to Europe is no slight argument in its favour. I have had assurances both from them and from others whose word carries weight, that the letters are really what the German editor says they

are ; that the story is no stupid fabrication, but perfectly true. At all events, what is thus freely discussed on the Continent, concerns us, after all, more nearly than it does any other nation ; and from my belief that Englishmen will like to have a chance of forming a judgment in the matter, I have put the letters before them in a translation which I shall hope is as accurate and as intelligible as the extraordinary fervour of the original will allow it to be.

May 1st, 1880.

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CAROLINE VON LINSINGEN.



EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION.

THE touching story which I here briefly narrate, and which by a chain of hitherto unpublished evidence I shall seek to substantiate, has remained a secret up to this hour, a secret as rigidly guarded by the English court on the one hand as by the Von Linsingen family on the other. The facts whereon this narrative is based are none the less reliable because official proofs and accuracy as to dates are wanting. Their absence is, indeed, easily accounted for, seeing that all documents having legal worth found their way to England, there to meet with the strictest

concealment, if not with actual destruction.

If at the time aught came to light in the narrow circle within which the persons moved who are chiefly here mentioned, if by some lips the secret was breathed, such whispers were quickly drowned in the clamour and din of the world's events, in the tumult of a French revolution and of a Napoleonic campaign. Some of those who at that time were best fitted to give evidence were then fettered by the obligations of family interest ; others, again, by solemn vows, had pledged themselves to silence. So it came about that nothing of this matter ever reached the outside world. It must also be noted that it was not until later that Prince William's *rôle* as a character of public importance was played, and that when he ascended the English throne, she whom he had once called wife had long since been dead, and was well beyond the pale of the unsparing influence of court scandal. Thus in Vehse's sound

and thorough work not even the slightest allusion is made to the first clandestine marriage of the Duke of Clarence, who afterwards became William the Fourth, king of England.

How, then, as will in justice be asked, how comes it that the editor has gained possession of facts and information of such a nature as to deserve belief? And who may the editor be? On what grounds does he withhold his name? To this latter question I shall at once give answer. If I now appear anonymously, it will not be for long; of that I am convinced. For the present I would crave permission to retain the mask, in order that the effect of what is said from behind it may suffer no damage. Judgment being passed upon the subject-matter, and upon that only, the verdict will the more likely be an impartial one. When that shall have been given I will readily set my name upon the title-page. With regard to the former question, the matter will meet with a

detailed exposition at my hands. I would merely remark at the outset that it is no part of my plan to gain notoriety by dint of any racy disclosures, but that I have striven to rescue the majestic portrait of a noble German woman from unmerited oblivion, one who for her high-mindedness, lofty culture, and poetic sensibilities, no less than by her truly tragic fate, should have claim to the pity, or at least the appreciative sympathy of posterity. It is true that thereby a shadow is cast upon an otherwise noble prince, who in his day was both popular statesman and righteous king, who is deserving of lasting renown had he done nothing beyond having brought the slavery question to a conclusion worthy of the age. Yes, on him it is that the shadow falls; yet *omnia veritas vincit!* If for these reasons there be some who hold that this publication should never have been undertaken, I shall but point to Caroline von Linsingen's letters, and they will plead my cause.

Some time back I received from a gentleman, a personal friend of mine, a packet of letters and papers which had been bequeathed to him, or rather to his wife, by Freiherr Dr. Karl von Reichenbach as a valuable legacy. . Permission was granted to me to make such literary use of the MS. as I deemed best. At the outset I thought it would probably be only some extravagances in pen and ink by Reichenbach himself; judge, then, of my amazement as I read through the documents with growing interest, and conceive how strange were my feelings as, on opening the little packet with its fastening of black ribbon, the letters of Caroline von Linsingen lay before me! What quaint perfume was there in the rough, grey paper, which yet held a faint scent mixed with its odour of decay! To me it seemed as if a tomb were opened, whence issued the wraiths of those long since dead, who were come to tell me of secrets until now buried in oblivion, of strange

stories never yet heard by man. My friend's wife, a lady of high intellectual gifts, had been the guardian of these literary treasures; she it was who entrusted me with the task of bringing them to the light. Both to her and to her husband I would here express my most hearty thanks. It was at once plain to me that these were no mere literary remains in the ordinary sense of the term. I instantly recognised that, apart from their historical worth, the form in which these unknown facts presented themselves was one which would lend them an added importance. For here we have a romance, one which it would be hard for the most fertile imagination to excel in points of interest; moreover, this romance is history; it is truth!

Certainly, as the papers lay before me, it was evident that there was many a serious gap between them as a whole. Here and there, from the shattered mosaic which I now fitted together, a block was

missing. The grandeur of the portrait was indeed still recognisable ; and to a right understanding of it I gained in Freiherr von Reichenbach a valuable and an enthusiastic guide. By the help of his own commentaries, biographical and critical, which accompanied the letters, expressive as they were of his well-known, if occasionally peculiar, sympathies, I was brought into a path that was in the main a sure one, along which I could go forward, if not without effort, at any rate without anxiety. As, however, all research of mine in printed books yielded no reliable data, I did not at once feel sure in my own mind as to the identity of some of the persons alluded to in the letters. As luck would have it, I then happened to form the acquaintance of a certain Baron Linsingen, living in Vienna. At first, as was natural, he showed all proper reticence ; yet, on learning the motives by which I was actuated, he with much willingness and courtesy

proceeded to furnish me with the needed information, to the best of his power. To this end, he wrote home to his relations on the subject, receiving an answer bearing the Gastdorf postmark, which letter reached me in due course. The main fact of importance which I gathered therefrom was that during the final decade of last century the Duke of Clarence had been a constant visitor at the house of Freiherr von Linsingen. I likewise learnt—that I had before suspected—that Reichenbach had already put himself in communication with the Von Linsingen family, and notably that he had corresponded with one Adolf von Linsingen, uncle to the baron of that name then resident in Vienna.

I shall now pass on to the story of the letters themselves, as told by Reichenbach. In the kind of introduction which he designed as their preface, we are told how his interesting discovery was made. I venture to give it verbatim, under the title which he himself chose.

CONCERNING THE HISTORY
OF THESE LETTERS, BY KARL,
FREIHERR VON REICHENBACH.

Is there any one who, having read the contents of these letters, will demand to know their origin? I doubt it. Yet to the unquestioning also I am glad to offer explanation. For three and thirty years past the letters have been in my hands. There they have lain, locked away in my desk: to no one have I ever granted a sight of them. And before that, they formed the profoundest of family secrets.

During the years 1815 to 1817 I had occasion to travel extensively with a view to widen my knowledge as to the natural sciences in their relation and application to practical industries, and more particularly as regarded mining and iron-smelting.

Leaving my home in Swabia, I travelled through Switzerland and Bavaria; Styria and Karinthia, with their rich stores of iron, exciting my chief interest. Thence, passing through Vienna, I went to Upper Silesia. As my route lay through Moravia, I took advantage of the opportunity to visit the so-called *Thermolampe*, belonging to the Altgraf Salm at Blansko, of which there had been much talk in the German papers during the years 1810 to 1814. To my regret, however, I found there nothing but ruins; each fresh effort had helped to weaken the whole enterprise, and for years past it had already been abandoned.

Yet this system of charcoal-burning interested me not a little. I was willing to credit the possibility of its success from a lucrative point of view, notwithstanding its collapse at Blansko; and at this last-named place I sought permission to look through, in the municipal archives, the papers relating to the undertaking. If,

thought I, one cannot be taught *how* charcoal furnaces ought to be constructed, at the least one will learn how they should *not* be built—a tremendous gain, forsooth, in matters of a practical kind! It was from the bitter losses sustained by others that I looked to draw my wisdom.

These documents, with their many drawings, formed a very bulky mass, and in order to wade thoroughly through them, and glean therefrom what was of importance to me, it became necessary to remain in Blansko for some little while. I thus grew more or less intimate with some of the mining officials, in whose society I at times found myself; and I was specially friendly with the family of Herr Teubner, the mining superintendent, who with his charming young wife showed me every hospitality.

When at their house, I used often to hear them speak of the mother of Madame Teubner, who had not long since been dead. She was always mentioned in

terms of reverence ; her great culture, the rank of her ancestors, her excellencies of mind and heart—all these were dwelt upon, it is true, yet always with a certain reticence, about which I never troubled to enquire.

On Sundays sometimes a tall, graceful man used to put in an appearance, who was introduced to me as Madame Teubner's father. This was Dr. Meineke, who thus came to visit his relations, leaving again on the day following.

As my whole attention was centred in these official papers that I had to examine, I did not give much heed to anything beside, and I thus saw little of what was going on around me. I was only aware that Herr Meineke held an appointment at a large cotton manufactory in Lettowitz, some three miles distant ; that the works there were well worth inspecting ; and that the manager's wife, who came from Stuttgart, and was a countrywoman of mine, had invited me to see them, as in travel-

ling to Silesia I should pass the factory on my way.

This invitation I accepted, and on leaving Blansko I spent a couple of days at the house of my friend Madame Bartelmus, to learn something of cotton-spinning. While there, to my delight, I again met Dr. Meineke. He was such capital company, infusing life and spirit into all of us by the jovial stories and anecdotes that he knew how to relate with such telling effect. By chance it occurred that one night the bedroom in which I was to sleep was one immediately adjoining his. From our conversation I gathered that Meineke was a native of Hildesheim, and that he had studied medicine at Helmstedt. He was still able to tell us much about Beireis, whose eccentricities he took evident pleasure in recounting. I further learnt that long since Herr Meineke had practised as a physician in Hanover, and, later on, in Berlin; that following his own choice he had devoted himself to chemistry. After

a time, it seems, he received an appointment from Count Salm at Blansko, in connection with the extraction of vinegar from charcoal, and when the furnaces were given up, he accepted the post of dyer at the Lettowitz cotton-factory, where I now found him in somewhat reduced circumstances.

Before retiring for the night we went on to talk at some length; and from Meineke's wide knowledge, as also from his thorough acquaintance with the whole history of the Blansko charcoal-furnaces, the conversation bid fair to be an instructive one for me. As a young man of seven-and-twenty I had a universal thirst for knowledge. Yet Meineke kept to the track of science for but short time together. He was for ever breaking aside from it to lapse into reminiscences of his wife, recently deceased, which were apparently the source of much painful embarrassment. I as yet knew little of him—of his wife nothing whatever; our mutual enthusiasm

for chemistry was all that we had in common ; and thus I was not particularly inclined to respond to all that he confided to me respecting his bereavement. If I listened, it was less from sympathy than from politeness ; I did not foresee how intense would be my subsequent interest in the matter ; thus all that he had told me was soon forgotten. Yet I can still recollect being struck at the utter difference that there was between Meineke, the brilliant conversationalist of the dinner-table, and him who formed my solitary companion in the night-time. His fun, his humour had vanished, his features betrayed a grave melancholy, which was discernible also in the tone of his voice. It was plain that some weight lay at his heart, which seemed impelled to seek a kindred one to share its load. He appeared to fancy that in his nature and my own there existed an affinity of sympathies ; and more than once he made as though he would have told me all. But

my temperament just then was not one which could yield encouragement to confidential disburthenings of this kind. In my hurried transit through unfamiliar districts it was impossible that these confidings should meet with other than barren response at my hands. Meineke, too, was my senior by some thirty years, and the contrast between his grey hair and the impassioned tone of his recital, was all too marked a one for me, a stranger, to meet his story with eager sympathy.

Had I then chosen to become Meineke's *confidant*, by thus obliging him, I should have had a minute account of his whole life-story, and notably of the unhappy circumstances attending his wedded life. Moreover, it would have come to me from his own lips and in his own way. Something from within forced him, as it were, to unburthen himself respecting this. His wife's history, so he termed it, was a novel of the most exciting kind. At any rate he could not resist telling me this much :

that in her he had possessed a charming and cultivated woman, whom he had never rightly understood until, after her death, he had read her posthumous papers. He only now saw all the injuries which by his misguided treatment he had brought upon her. It was a matter of ceaseless remorse to him that he was now powerless ever to undo the results of his ignorance and utter want of appreciation. In these confessions of his there was an underlying current of despair, against which he seemingly strove; and whenever he neared this point I always hastened to give another turn to the conversation. His remorse was the remorse of a murderer, so keen was it; and I, knowing nothing to the contrary, harboured the dread that some actual crime might really be at the root of all this mysterious conduct. To make such a discovery was wholly distasteful to me; if anything, I sought to avoid doing so; and this will explain how it came that each essay of his to gain my

deeper confidence was met by systematic rebuffs.

Soon after this I pursued my journey, ever in quest of my smelting-furnaces and forges. Meineke, with all his mysteries, was speedily forgotten. I thought that I should probably never again set eyes upon all these people who had shown me so much kindness.

The fates, however, had willed it otherwise. From my interest in coal-furnaces there had sprung up a link of union. On reaching home, I built in one of the lovely valleys of the Black Forest, at Hausach, a coal-furnace, designed on principles of my own, being careful to keep out such errors of construction as my stay at Blansko had taught me to avoid. At the first trial this furnace, as well as all subsequent ones, proved thoroughly successful. A further result of this was that, five years later, I entered into an agreement with Count Salm, by which among other things I engaged to build for him upon his estate

several furnaces of this kind with factories attached. Thus I once more came to Blansko—this time to remain there for longer together. The rooms set apart for my family were in the same wing of the castle as that in which the Teubners lived ; thus they and we were both under one roof. Our daily intercourse ripened into hearty friendship. Meineke *père*, now Curator of the Brünn Museum, once more appeared upon the scene, often paying me a visit. The friendship between Madame Teubner and my wife was specially close ; death only put an end to it. When Teubner died, a few years later, the life annuity settled by Count Salm and myself upon his widow helped to quicken our friendship. Meineke's death occurred soon after, my own good wife was the next to quit us, and some sixteen years have elapsed since Madame Teubner died. The grave then closed over the last witness to Caroline's sad history, and of all that woe nothing remains—nothing but the few white locks upon my brow.

It was during this period, then—in the year 1826, about—that Madame Teubner, who, in confidence, had often told my wife about her mother's misfortunes in a disconnected sort of way, gave her these posthumous letters of hers to read. They both wished me to read them, too. Increasing pressure of work, however, formed a hindrance. Years went on before I was able to do so. During this period, when the Teubners came to leave Brünn for Graz, Madame Teubner made me a present of the letters; they were to be a memento of herself and of our many days of friendship spent together. For thrice ten years and more they lay in my desk. I cherished them in sacred recollection of loved friends, looking through them now and again when the stress of everyday existence threatened to crush me, thus gaining courage to bear up against its leaden weight.

And now, when Death's icy hand has touched the kindly hearts of those who all freely gave their tears at this tale of sad-

ness, I alone am left, the sole inheritor of their sorrow as of their joy. Three of the persons here concerned, Jettchen, Teubner and Meineke, I myself knew and loved as friends. I followed in the footsteps of the mother who was gone—her life-breath still, as it were, surrounded me. But now when all have left me, when bereft even of the presence of my own gentle wife, I look in vain for one sympathising eye, there is no one living with whom I could speak, who could share my feeling at Caroline's touching story. Something now urges me to speak forth to the world.

“Yet beauteous souls there are, who glow, who burn
With passion for the splendid, the sublime,”

and if in the reading of these letters one feeling heart should kindle, if amid the crowd of passers-by a single eye should moisten at her tones of lament, my self-chosen pledge of service to them is fulfilled; it is sanctified by my having won for her, even in death, the pity and the sympathy of some kindred heart.

CAROLINE von Linsingen, it cannot be denied, forms a remarkable psychological phenomenon. Even had she not been joined to a Royal Prince by tender ties, she would yet have a high claim to our interest, and her individuality would always be a marked one. Her poems, surcharged with the Klopstock spirit—her letters, full of soul if full of sentiment, harking back to the Werther period,—her strange illnesses, somnambulism and trance,—the tragic contrast of her sensitive nature to the stern reality of outward circumstance,—all this, we say, yields over-abundant material for a most interesting psychological study. In addition to this, it was a prince of royal blood, upon whose brows the crown of England afterwards shone, by whom she was beloved, and to whom she was secretly wedded ; and who then forsook her, thinking to

find in the arms of an actress a recompense for his lost happiness, while she, in noble self-abnegation, waived all her rights, in the belief that she was an obstacle in the prince's path, and later on gave her hand to another far below her in station. Yes, this picture of a life is one so deeply affecting as is seldom brought to our view, a picture whose lights are many and varied, yet which is rich withal in deep and sombre shadow.

Caroline's marriage with the Duke of Clarence, afterwards King William IV. of England, sets all our knowledge of her in quite a new light; it gives a higher meaning to her letters; the background to her whole life becomes an extraordinary one; in a word, her character gains historical importance.

To the better understanding of the letters, I shall now give a brief *résumé* of all the facts, avoiding all necessary details, for these may be gathered from their immediate source, the documents themselves.

The father of our heroine was Lieutenant-General Wilhelm von Linsingen, commanding the 12th Hanoverian infantry; he lived alternately at Lüneburg, and Uelzen. Her mother was also a Von Linsingen by birth. Caroline was the second of eight children, her birthday being on the 27th of November, 1768. She makes special reference in her letters to the following of her brothers and sisters; Juliane, afterwards Baroness Jenisen, born 1767 (the "Julchen" of the letters); Martin, and Fredrich Ernst Jacob, grandfather of the Baron von Linsingen living in Vienna. Ernst was her favourite brother and the Prince's bosom friend. His death only took place on June 21st, 1853, when he held the rank of a general of cavalry and adjutant to the King of Hanover. This great man was a party to the secret, and could have given the minutest evidence respecting it, had not his lips been sealed by the bonds of friendship no less than by a solemn vow.

Caroline's father was on terms of the

closest intimacy with the Grand Ducal House of Mecklenburg-Strelitz. He accompanied the Princess Sophia Charlotte to England on the occasion of her marriage to King George the Third; and remained there for three years, receiving marks of special favour from the king. He afterwards went back to Germany, but often returned to England from time to time. He had promised the queen to entrust his youngest daughter Caroline entirely to her care, and the child had scarcely reached her fourteenth year when the queen begged that she might be sent to her. Caroline's grandmother, however, being her guardian, was unwilling to part with her, so long as her education remained incomplete. So she did not go to London, either then, or indeed afterwards. But later on the queen's third son, William Henry, went to Hanover, accompanied by General von Linsingen; and among his suite were a younger brother of Caroline, a Lord Dutton, and some other

English and Hanoverian nobles. A brilliant reception was prepared for the heir to the British throne, and Caroline took a more active part in the festivities than "she was wont to do on similar occasions."* The Fates were already at work weaving magic circles around her.

William brought Caroline a letter from his royal mother, and also a diamond shawl-pin with her monogram set in brilliants. This gift was afterwards the means of rescuing her from a serious predicament. On April 13th, 1790, the two saw each other for the first time, and it was not long before they learnt to love one another passionately. Caroline's father was no sooner aware of it, than he used every effort to part the lovers. He at once wrote to the queen; yet she did not take the matter seriously; she asked that this dallying, this philandering between the young people might be suffered to go

* Letter to Teubner, p. 49.

on. An ideal fancy like this, as she thought, might serve to keep the Prince in the path of virtue ; it would guard him from those snares and pit-falls, through which the innocence of one of such exalted station too often meets its ruin. She doubtless did not foresee that she might thereby wreck the happiness of her *protégée*, a young and sensitive maiden, who in truth knew nothing of flirtation, but had given her virgin heart to the prince.

After a year's time, Caroline yielded to the urgent, the "irresistible" entreaties of William ; and a Scotch minister, named Parsons, a close adherent of the Prince, united the lovers in a lonely chapel, in the presence of a few friends who had been admitted to the secret. The compact was to be one for time and for eternity, hallowed in this consecrated spot, sanctified by the most spotless of love, for ever made indissoluble by the fulfilment of the law no less than by oaths of changeless fidelity !

This took place on the 21st of August, 1791, near Pyrmont, where the Linsingen family, and Prince William Duke of Clarence with his brother the Duke of York, were then staying. The latter, whose reputation gains little by what is said of him in the letters, had arrived at this watering-place in time to celebrate his brother's birthday. Here one should read the extremely interesting description of the ball on the night preceding the clandestine marriage.* How William's jealousy is kindled at the familiar tone adopted by his brother towards Caroline, by which it nearly came about that all had been discovered; how Caroline's father according to custom places her hand in that of her partner in the dance, and how she, bending forward, says, as if to out-trick fate, "You are giving him to me for life, father!" and how the venerable old man, seeming to half comprehend the agi-

* Caroline to Teubner, p. 70.

tation he cannot but notice, replies : "Would that ye could have your wish, but that cannot be"; how Caroline, before retiring, hastens again to her father's arms, as if to ask his pardon for all the cares she is now about to bring upon him—all this has great dramatic force : it is full of the utmost freshness and life.

As the young wife, Caroline's state was now one of inexpressible happiness, yet at the same time she was filled with those gloomy forebodings which now and again overshadow finely-organised natures, just in moments when joy is at its zenith. Like some vague and shadowy phantom her future loomed darkly before her. To this mood she has given striking expression in one of her remarkable letters, which were written twenty years after the event in question. *

As one of the many delicate touches with which the letters abound, Caroline re-

* Caroline to Teubner, p. 70.

lates among other things, how on her brother Ernst's attempting to crown her with a myrtle-wreath, William springs forward to wrest it from him. This being resisted, a goodhumoured dispute ensued. "To my gratification," says Ernst, with emotion in his voice, "you both forgot this beautiful emblem; no daughter of our house can wed without it. It is for Caroline, this crown; yet is it not therefore yours also, beloved prince? William, brother," he added, in broken tones, "to-day you are giving her all—are leading her on to a paradise of bliss. O let it be mine, too, to do something for the beautiful one whom I to-day give wholly to your keeping—she of whom I rob myself, whom I entrust to you." Thereupon the Prince himself leads him up to the beautiful bride, who stands there dissolved in tears, and Ernst sets the wreath upon her brow. Dutton soon after this conducts her to the chapel, where the Prince, with Jackson his faithful atten-

dant, Parsons the minister, and George the Duke of York were already in waiting. Ernst, filling the place of his father, gives the bride away and leads her up to the altar, where she kneels down between him and Dutton, "William's responses," she writes, "were uttered in a clear and solemn tone, although he trembled no less violently than myself. Indescribable were my feelings as in the grey haze of morning (it was between five and six o'clock) I gave myself up wholly to my beloved."

By the joy which this love had brought him, the Prince, great as he was, seemed even to gain in greatness. His every action, as Caroline remarks, then bore such thorough witness to "his great, noble, kingly heart," that she marvelled at the good fortune which empowered her to call this man, aye this man, her own. He embraced his friends, thanking them by looks where words failed him; and, in thus making them witness of this glad time, his recompense was a better one than

gold. Caroline at this juncture could no longer contain herself. She flung herself at his feet, covering his hand with kisses. The newly-married pair then returned by different ways to Pyrmont. The Prince was compelled to receive and acknowledge a host of birthday congratulations—how different, indeed, were those that might have been his!—and there was an invitation from his aunt, the Duchess of Brunswick, which he had perforce to accept. Nor could Caroline fail to be present amongst the court-ladies assembled in the ball-room. On seeing William standing there next his brother, in all the splendour of his rank, on noticing how even reigning princes and princesses kept deferentially aloof from him,—as she saw all this, her bosom swelled with pride; it was with rapture that she thought how near she stood to his heart. And this feeling which possessed her was a natural one enough. She deemed herself not altogether unworthy of him, yet in her inmost

heart she could not but wish that he were a mere commoner and nothing more.

Caroline had obtained the Prince's solemn promise, that the marriage should remain merely nominal for a year. Does this need any explanation, which, whatever it might be, could only vulgarise so delicate a matter? Reichenbach is doubtless right, when, in speaking of our heroine's character, he says :—

“No one will think it strange that a young girl and an uncorrupted youth like the Prince should, when brought into daily contact, show signs of mutual ardour. Nature here takes her course, and the ideal beauty of their pristine love quickly yields its place to sentimental passion. But as Caroline consented to the marriage solely on the condition that the Prince should respect her pre-nuptial state, and as she exacted an whole and entire fulfilment of this vow, the facts of the case become of more than average

interest ; they quit the common sphere of human weakness and frailty. In Caroline we detect a character that stands superior to the things of this world ; it is a spirit of rare energy. The Heavenly is all to it, the earthly as naught. It is a character endowed with a might sufficient to soar to the loftiest height. In this single trait Caroline's whole fate lay, as it were, cradled ; herein is to be sought the basis of its later development." Beautiful words, these ; but there are some things that have no need of words.

After the decisive step had been taken, and Caroline had become the Prince's wife, her main object was to find a favourable opportunity to communicate the secret to her father, and with his support to secure the consent of the royal parents in England. As the letters tell us, it had been entrusted to Lord Dutton to arrange that the marriage should be a thoroughly valid one according to English law, so that no pretext on that score could be found for

a divorce.* Although the evidence of a marriage certificate is wanting, we must credit its validity, as otherwise how could we interpret the Prince's subsequent vacillation when in England, or his confession that it rested with Caroline whether the marriage should be annulled or not; or has her noble renunciation no meaning? That she was the dupe of a scandalous trick is out of the question: the marriage was valid according to English rite.

The two now passed a time of ideal happiness together. Formerly of a melancholy turn of mind and full of sad forebodings, the young wife now grew blithe, nay, even coquettish, as is shewn in her letter to Ernst, her brother;† though in this there is also no want of earnestness or of effect.

In this she tells him how Count Schwicheldt, "of the Pyrmont *beau monde*," gave

* Caroline to Teubner, p. 51.

† Caroline to Ernst, p. 87.

a picnic, arranged on a princely scale, which took place in a meadow near the Sennerwald, to which a large number of guests were invited. As most of the company had come on horseback, the proposal that these should extend their ride some little way into the surrounding country met with general approval. The Count led the party, and suddenly they all found themselves close to the very chapel in which Caroline and the Prince had been secretly married. The whole neighbourhood was rich in recollections for the lovers; and Prince William grew monosyllabic and showed signs of restlessness from the first—just as before, in this very spot. He and Caroline had both avoided it during the whole year; it was not until their wedding-day had come round again that they had meant to visit it to renew their plighted troth. As soon as the Prince caught sight of the chapel, he sprang from his horse, and holding Caroline's rein he helped her to dismount.

The whole company did the same. He led her to the entrance of the chapel, and not finding the key went to seek it, leaving Caroline meanwhile on Lord Dutton's arm, who besought her to be calm and to keep her self-possession as otherwise all would be lost. On returning with the key, the Prince hurried into the chapel, and falling before the altar he kissed the steps upon which Caroline and he had formerly knelt. Caroline, half fainting, was led out by Dutton, under the pretext of looking for the diamond shawl-pin which the queen had given her, and which she pretended she had lost. Outside the chapel door stood Franz von Alten and Werner von dem Busche, two ardent admirers of Caroline. Although rivals, they were yet the best of friends. They both offered to help in the search for the brooch which Caroline really had never had with her. Dutton went back to the chapel, leaving Caroline without. He found the Prince still sunk in deep reverie at the foot of the altar, while

those around seemed anxious and bewildered, as none could explain or ventured to explain the Prince's conduct.

At length the Prince rose and left the chapel. As he helped Caroline to remount, he pressed her to him with such fervour that she almost uttered a cry. In a low voice he entreated her not to ride at his side, for were she to do so, he would be sure to betray himself.

Alten and Busche were waiting for her in the avenue leading up to the house, to inform Caroline of the fruitlessness of their search, and came forward to help her to dismount, when William rushed between them and forced them both back. In doing this, the miniature of Caroline which he always carried at his bosom fell out. He hurriedly caught it up and pressed it to Caroline's heart and to his own. From this occurrence, as well as from others, it was clear to Lord Dutton that it was high time to acquaint General von Linsingen with the secret.

More than a month had passed beyond the proscribed year, and Caroline already perceived that she was likely to become a mother, before they could bring themselves to acquaint the General with the whole facts. Now, too late, he separated the lovers and wrote to England. The Prince was recalled. We learn that William hereupon attempted to commit suicide, and was only saved by the interference of General von Linsingen. It may have been the fact of his having been wounded by a chance shot from the pistol that gave rise to the rumour that he had fought a duel with the Prince.*

The father in his distress at this juncture gave his word of consent, though a conditional one. He did not, however, restrict his daughter in any way until intelligence should arrive from William's parents. The Prince went to England, and the expected news soon came to hand.

* Caroline to Teubner, p. 122.

They offered no hope to Caroline for her recognition in England as William's wife, and she determined upon an heroic sacrifice—nothing less than to separate herself from the Prince. A miscarriage at Driburg, whither her father had taken her, destroyed her last hope, and strengthened her in her resolution. In spite of the Prince's appearance soon after at Driburg, and his vows of fidelity and adjurations to her never to agree to a separation, Caroline only too clearly saw, from a letter which he brought from the queen, what was thought of this marriage tie at the Court of St. James's.

The Prince departed after a while, accompanied as far as Stade by Lord Dutton. It was a farewell for ever. The two never saw each other again. When at the last moment he entreated her, come what might, never to forget her plighted troth to him, she was silent.* She well

* Caroline to Ernst, p. 136.

knew what would come. It may, indeed, seem, to all outward appearance, that she was the cause of the sorrowful parting. But the deeper we look, the more clearly do we see that by yielding to the logical sequence of events, she, as it were, divined the cruel fate that could not but await her. Who could wonder that she should swoon on the Prince's leaving her? That she also should have contemplated suicide, as she in one place vaguely hints,* is less likely.

Immediately after William's departure, her father took her to Hanover, and thus ends the second act of this tragedy.

* * * * *

Baron Reichenbach writes : † " On leaving Caroline, the Prince went to England, and when it was urged upon him by all the means that lie at the disposal of the great, to decide upon what course of action he would adopt

* Caroline to Ernst, p. 140. † In an unpublished essay.

towards Caroline, he pleaded that he was not 'an oak in the storm.' No, indeed! He was weak, so weak, that instead of manfully standing up in defence of his wife, and claiming his right to protect her, he yielded to pressure and cast the decision upon herself. With calmness he promised to agree to a separation, if Caroline freely renounced her rights! His excuse was that he thought it impossible that she would consent to this, but it simply was an unpardonable disregard of Caroline, exposing her to what his affection should certainly have spared her." Her noble behaviour here will be learnt from her letters.

For three years nothing was heard from the Prince after the separation had taken place. It seems probable that Lord Dutton offered marriage to Caroline, but she had fallen into ill-health; the loss of her lover had been too much for her strength. Nature avenges herself for all excesses of grief or joy—there is no more inexorable

mistress than she. Strive as her spirit might with all heroism against her terrible fate, her tender frame could not keep pace with its ravages. A consuming fever seized her, bringing her to the very brink of the grave. The doctors stood irresolute around her bed ; they did not understand the character of her disease, and gave up all hope of her recovery. At last death itself appeared to have set in ; for Caroline lay pale, motionless, stiff. All thought that life had fled, and she was laid out all decked with flowers, and a quiet funeral was prepared for her. One of the doctors who had attended her was a young man of prepossessing appearance and great abilities, though but little respected, on account of his youth, by his colleagues. On the day fixed for the burial, he examined the corpse, and not perceiving the usual tokens that accompany death, he became uneasy and suspicious. He maintained that no sufficient signs of actual death were apparent in the body, and that double

precaution was called for, owing to their having only partially understood the nature of the disease. In spite of the opposition of the older physicians, the young doctor's urgent request that the burial should be postponed for one day, was granted. On the following day the body was found to have suffered no further change. The young doctor once more begged for a day's respite, yet this again brought no new signs of death. Thus from day to day it continued. The affair began to excite attention, as it was now seen that Caroline would have been buried alive, if the advice of the younger doctor had not been followed. All saw that this was not death ; it was a trance. She was placed again in her bed, and redoubled care was given to the poor sufferer. At length, in the third week, she opened her eyes, her breath returned to her, and her heart regained its action. The young physician who had saved her life was Dr. Meineke.

Filled with gratitude to him and respect for his skill, at his pressing his suit, Caroline gave her hand to Meineke, the man who had snatched her from death, who had given her a second life. She became his wife; but we learn from her letters that this marriage was not a happy one, and how could it be so? She seemed to live in her first love, and her constant delight, even though a mournful one, was ever to celebrate its chief anniversaries, and her account of her experiences as she wrote them down for her son-in-law, Teubner, seems to have afforded her great gratification. As late as the year 1813, only a short time before her death, she poured out her feelings in a touching poem, wherein she sees her loved William, in a dream, as he, wearied from battle, sits alone before a fire and thinks on her, his beloved one. But with the morn her dream vanishes. Throughout her life her daily thoughts were of him.

In her forty-fifth year she passed away, leaving behind her an imperishable remembrance,—the history of her love and of her sorrow,—a history as sad and as touching as any that has been recorded.





Caroline to Teubner.*

My father being a great favourite and a most intimate friend of the Grand Ducal House of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, my destiny was already fixed even before my birth. He accompanied the Princess to London on the occasion of her marriage with the King of England. He remained in this country for three years, and was in such high favour with the good-natured George III., that it was with reluctance that he could obtain permission to return to Hanover ; indeed, as long as he lived, my father

* From Blansko, without date. It may here be remarked, that the letters have been arranged not in their strict chronological order, but in accordance with the course of events which they narrate.

was the recognised favourite of the whole family. He used to stop in London for three months at a time, and it was during one of these visits that he promised the Queen to put his youngest daughter wholly under her care. I was scarcely fourteen years old when the Queen claimed the fulfilment of this promise, but my grandmother declined to give her consent to my removal until my education should have been completed. I had now often to keep up a correspondence with her Majesty, who still had an affection for everything German. Her spirited and kindly letters helped much to add to my youthful pleasure, and to form my character, for I was at great pains to come up to her idea of what she would wish me to be. On one of my father's last visits to London, the royal parents entrusted him with the care of their third son, William Henry, the pet of his family, the pet of the nation. My father's youngest brother and a certain Englishman, Lord Dutton,

acted as equerries, besides other English and Hanoverian nobles whom my father had recommended to form the suite. In Hanover the greatest preparations were made for the reception of the beloved son of an adored monarch, and I took a greater part in them than was my wont on similar occasions.

William came with my father, bringing me a letter from his royal mother, and a shawl-pin with her initials in diamonds. It was on the 13th of April that I first saw him. In July we already knew that by death alone our love could have its end. No sooner did my beloved father become aware of the position in which we stood to each other, than he straightway sought to part us, himself appealing to the Queen in the matter. Yet she, who was so fearful for the ardent blood of her son William, took the matter but lightly. She knew nothing of love, and begged my father to let this dallying continue. She rather rejoiced that her son's fancy for me,

at this the most critical period of his youth, should serve to keep his virtue intact. None dreamed that for two lives it meant the utter wreck of all their joy.

A year later I finally yielded to William's irresistible entreaties, and in the presence of Ernst and Dutton we were made one at the altar by a Scotch minister, who afterwards went to Washington, and who was greatly attached to William.

Naught, naught of our bliss! Words can never describe it; and my heart is broken. *Only after thirteen months did we disclose our secret to my father*, when William had also written home to his parents. This would not yet have been done, had not others urged his return. For the King was ailing; the Prince of Wales lay sick with a wasting fever; the Duke of York, through his excesses, had earned the hatred of both kindred and nation; William it was who should shine upon his parent's throne. My father at once went to London himself. In two months Wil-

liam followed him, and to me the explanation was given that *I* formed the obstacle to my beloved one's happiness. As if I believed it! Oh! I knew too well the heart in which I lived and had my being.

I was treated with unexampled care and kindness. Without my voluntary renouncement a separation was impossible. I was a foreigner, married by a Scottish clergyman in a foreign country, and Lord Dutton, faithful as he was, had been careful to see that nothing should be left wanting to make our marriage a valid one in the eye of English law. William tacitly agreed to a divorce provided I gave my voluntary consent to it, for he believed that this would be impossible. Yet true love can sacrifice all joy in life for the object of its affection. I renounced him, and—ah God! You will find the rest in my other letters. Read them in the order in which they are numbered. The first one to my brother contrasts so fearfully with the others, that I was terrified yester-

day as I read it over. The two that come next are transcripts which I made for my brother, and the final one is also the last to my brother, perhaps the last which I ever wrote to him. I kept the three first back when I found them in my brother's pocket-book at Berlin. These few pages form a terrible epitome of the history of my heart, of my whole existence. I can never part with them. The——

I was about to add something further, yet I cannot. By word of mouth, I shall be able to bridge over many a gap which likely enough you will find.

Judge then, my good Teubner, what Jettchen must be to me, feel too what you yourself can be to me, and ask yourself whether it is to a stony heart and to untrustworthy hands that you commit her happiness. I can give you no greater proof of my confidence than by confiding to you a secret which for Jettchen, just as for all the rest of the world, must ever remain untold. Its importance you will

recognise. Oh have hope! I make this appeal to you with greater conviction than yesterday.

Caroline to Teubner.

BLANSKO, *August 20th*, 18—.

To-day it will be late, dearest, before you get my letter, for it was close upon eleven o'clock when Mathis started with Wieba. I am sorry for this, as I know how anxiously you will be awaiting news from us. I know how *my* heart beats when I think that I shall soon hear from you, and how long the hours seem to me until the letter comes. I hope that to-day your work engrosses you. . . . I hope, I shall wish, that you are joyous and gay, shall pray Heaven to give the happiness to *you*, the tears to *me*.

I promised you that I would always be true and open with you, and so, dearest, I must confess that this day is a sad, sad one for me. This day was the last that saw me a maid, a bride. Oh how inexpressible were then my feelings! A bliss was

mine such as angels only know, yet I was withal so sad that I could hardly keep back my tears, especially when William spoke to me, or even looked at me. His face, too, wore a graver look than had ever been there before.

On this day my father gave a dinner-party and a ball, and the coincidence was a strange one. A relation of ours, as it happened, had chosen this very day for a fête, to which all the society in the neighbourhood was invited. But his son was taken ill at Göttingen, and he was forced to leave Pyrmont instantly, so my father did the honours in his absence.

I am not sure if you are acquainted with the custom of celebrating on the eve of the wedding, at the bride's house, the so-called *Polterabend*. During dinner I sat between my two groomsmen, Dutton and Ernst, with William as my *vis-à-vis*. On leaving the table, we at once went to the theatre, where *Don Carlos* was given. William kept close to me, and oh! what

enjoyment we had! When the Princess Eboli exclaimed, "*Once only can I give, yet 'tis for aye,*" our eyes, dizzy with love, met, and it was hard for each to refrain from falling into the other's arms. But our guardian angels stood beside us. Dutton and Ernst kept unceasing watch, for they both loved us, and loved us passionately. They screened us at the proper moment, and by laughing and whispering managed to draw the attention of the company upon themselves. What recked they if they, the very flowers of *haut ton*, were looked upon as slightly intoxicated! But when Posa says to the queen*—

"My lot

Was such as few indeed have e'er enjoyed;
I loved a Prince's son. My heart to one—
To that one object given—embraced the world!

"Oh, my dream

Was lovely! But the will of Providence
Has summoned me away, before my hour,
From this my beauteous work. His Roderigo
Soon shall be his no more"—

* Schiller's "Don Carlos," Act iv. Sc. 21.

then the first inkling of my dark, dark future loomed before me. I trembled violently, and could scarcely contain myself. At the same time, William, turning round, said he would like to go, in order that the dancing might not be too long postponed. Dutton and Ernst now led me, all trembling, home, as I had to change my dress for the dance. The fresh breeze revived me, but I was down-cast at heart until I again saw my beloved one. I clothed myself in pure white, my only ornament being a green coronet beset with pearls, and the beautiful cross of my order, which I wore only on festive occasions,—never before at a dance. While we were at the play, the Duke of York had unexpectedly arrived to join in the festivities next day, on the occasion of his brother's birthday. This was a piece of good fortune upon which we had not counted. According to English custom, each dancer keeps his partner the whole

evening through.* The Duke of York chose my eldest sister, and William was thus obliged to dance with the youngest daughter of his host. By the laws of etiquette, my father having first led Julchen to the Duke, afterwards took me up to William, and when the worthy old man seized my hand and placing it in his pressed both violently together, can you not imagine our mutual feelings? As my father withdrew his hand I stooped to kiss it, saying in a low tone, "You are giving me to him for life!" He saw my emotion, and half seemed to understand me, for he answered, "Would that ye could have your wish, but it cannot be!" As he left us, William glanced half ardently, half sadly, towards me and said, "How charmingly has the dear bride clad herself, quite as I should wish; and yet how like a sacrificial lamb she looks! There is that in your soul to-day which I know not

* English etiquette has in truth changed somewhat since then!—*Tr.*

yet—is it that you rue it? can you not make the sacrifice? I said to him that as it was the only day on which I could with right put on my wreath and cross, I had not been able to resist the temptation of wearing them once again. To this he passionately rejoined: “Even as matron, the wreath of purity can serve you as adornment, for until death comes will your heart keep unstained and guileless; and this order, to which only as maiden you have right, shall be changed for one such as kings’ daughters only wear.” The Duke of York approached us with my sister to know what it was that William was saying in such vehement manner, and asked me whether he were put out because my order were so like his own (for it also hung by a sky-blue ribbon with silver edging), or whether his indignation were at my wearing it not round the waist but over the left breast, thereby attracting the gaze of all to that enticing spot. William’s eye flashed fire at this remark, and if

Ernst had not come up to ask the Duke if it was his pleasure that the dance begin, the two brothers would certainly have quarrelled, and then,—how different might have been my lot!

The Duke hurried off with my sister to the ball-room, and as we followed I tried to pacify William somewhat. How I trembled when the Duke said to Julchen, "Oh! just look round; is it not as if my brother were leading some blushing bride to the altar? He looks as proud as a king in his conquest!" I begged William to keep calm and not to listen to the Duke, and he obeyed me. Dancing began, and we joined the whirling mass.

It was a lovely evening. The doors of the ball-room, leading to the avenue, were flung open; and between the pauses of the music people walked about up and down outside under the trees. Each dancer was accompanied by his partner; this was quite *en règle* and attracted no attention; and in the stream of promen-

aders it was easy enough for us now and again to withdraw from the throng, and mutually to unfold our hearts in the quiet night. We renewed our vows to live everlastingly for love and virtue ; and on my breast he swore it, that so far as he was able, he would help on humanity to happiness, and ever be brave and good and noble. I set him thoroughly at ease as to my deep melancholy, and he soon saw that it was but natural : while approving it, he nevertheless sought to overcome it.

At one time Ernst and Dutton were with us, and under the linden-tree, where we had sat the night before, he clasped us to his heart, and we all swore sacred vows of love, of friendship, and of probity. "Oh, think on this hour, if ever ye are prone to go astray," he cried, softly yet earnestly. "For myself, in the arms of this angel I am safe ; but you two, be to me my Posas if, by cruel chance, I am torn from my wife." A shudder went through us. He cast himself upon his knees, and

glancing heavenwards, the moonlight fell upon the handsome features of his noble face. Mutely pressing me to him, he sprang up, and we went back in silence along the avenue. When, at the last, we found ourselves alone, I said, "But, William, say now if we should one day be parted, what then?" "Then," rejoined he, "grief and misery and woe will be our lot through life; yet we shall love each other to the end." Tearing open his vest he pressed my face to his bosom, adding, "Here you live for evermore, and here, too," as for the first time he hastily imprinted a glowing kiss upon my breast. "Oh forgive what I do. A few hours more and you will be my wife by the rites of the church; but I renew my pledge of yesternight." Then, as we knelt there, both of us registered a vow, one which I, even when another's wife, have loyally kept.

By the time we reached the house the company had dispersed.

At home, after we had wished our parents good-night, I went back once more to my father, and pressed his hand to my heart. It seemed as if I were parting with him for good and all. And was I not about to do this? Was I not about to quit his fatherly care that I might yield myself wholly to the man whom I loved but once, yet loved for ever—whom I love still?

The dear old man said to me, "You do not seem to me quite well. You had better take a thorough rest, for there will be much to tire you again to-day; go some other time with Ernst to see the sun rise." (This, you must know, was the pretext for my riding out with my brother at four o'clock in the morning.) I made no answer, but kissed his hand and went to my room. Did I sleep? O! Teubner, you can hardly ask me that!

* * * *

Night has now come. The hour is two o'clock; this was almost the very time

when I parted with my father, to wait half anxiously, half joyfully, with hope and fear, that hour which was to join me to him I loved. Now, too, I am alone in my solitary chamber, yet my soul is so wrapt in thoughts of him that more than once in fancy I seemed to see William leading Henry by the hand, and Ernst and Dutton following behind. But a moment ago, and I fancied that I heard your voice call to me. At the thought, I remembered your words of yesterday. Terrified, I went forth, but without all was drear and silent as the grave.

It may be that I do wrong in bringing back these scenes, in reviving again the memory of these days; yet in them, and in them only, do I live wholly in him and he in me. He is there,—and Ernst and Dutton,—each recollection.—Ah! God! I am so weary, so faint with tears and bitterness and sleep is gone from me! William, William, in vain do seas and lands divide us; our hearts yet ring in unison; they

are one ! Our souls are as lute-strings pitched in the self-same key, and the cadences, now loud, now soft, that vibrate through the one meet with their echo in the other. Like notes that harmonize, our twin souls float on the wings of passion towards a goal of meeting, to melt, to blend and dissolve into one pure and splendid chord. Ever and anon we are faintly conscious of a mutual sympathy ; and by every moonbeam falling through the casement, by all the twilight mists that wrap us round, by each quiet, peaceful hour, we seem to be brought nearer, closer, each to each.

I am spent ; I must rest. Are you, too, thinking of *me* at this moment ? Ah no, no ! Ye powers of heaven, let my beloved son have peaceful slumber, nor reveal to him in dreams all that his mother suffers, here in her solitude. I must go to Jette, my Jette, must watch her as she calmly sleeps ; must kiss the dear one and give her my blessing ; this, perchance, may

bring me peace. Oh, dearest beloved children, what comfort to your mother is it that ye both cannot see how her heart bleeds in anguish! The pen well-nigh drops from my trembling fingers. I must, I must take rest. I shall go and pray; pray for myself as for you—for William, for me!

BLANSKO, 21st *August*,

4 *a.m.*

Once more has the day come round for me, on which I became the happiest of mortals. Once more I am to feel the blissful joy which lay in the certainty of being wholly his: once more, too, all a martyr's anguish is mine, that I am severed from him, for ever, for this life! How I tremble, how my heart throbs, how all the past revives! I hear my brother's voice, urging them to saddle the horses without delay. The maid enters with the breakfast; Ernst is behind her; both marvel that I am ready dressed; my brother entreats me to be calm. Now, as

I hear the tramp of horses to bear me to *his* arms, I tremble just as I did then ; “I come, I come,” I cry, yet I remain rooted to the spot. Ernst bends to kiss me, but I withdraw my lips, for even a brother’s kiss seems to me a theft from William at this holy time. He understands me, and smiles. And now I hurry down the staircase. George is holding my horse. (George was only a servant, yet he had been educated with us, and was somewhat older than we were, and though formerly our *major domo*, was now our friend—clever, intelligent, and adroit, he was a jewel of the first water ; without him I could never ride alone, and he would have sacrificed his life ten times over for me.) I feel from his behaviour that he knows all ; he kisses my hand for the first time, and forces back my brother, who was about to help me to mount. Scarcely am I seated before I am in full gallop along the familiar road ; and in a short half-hour I sink into William’s arms ; in silence he clasps me to his

bosom, leading me into a peasant's hut. Here Ernst had got everything ready under the pretext of preparing a breakfast for us. Parsons and Dutton advance towards us, retreating with equal haste on William's motioning to them. He shows me the clothes that had been sent on before for me, kneels before me for a few minutes, then leaves me, but no sound escapes our lips. What earthly blessedness can match this godlike rapture! I hurriedly dress myself. I was forced to leave to William the choice of my apparel. A robe of dazzling whiteness, a broad gold belt with diamond clasp, this formed my whole bridal adornment. William now returns. He rushes to my arms, but what we then said to each other no tongue, no pen may ever repeat. With words such as these seraphs might greet one another! Ernst enters; he has a wreath of fresh myrtle in his hand. William springs forward to crown me with it. This my brother forbids, and a friendly

dispute ensues. At last Ernst says, with emotion in his voice, "To my gratification you both forgot this beautiful emblem; no daughter of our house can wed without it. It is for Caroline, this crown; yet is it not therefore yours as well, beloved prince?" "William, brother," he continued, in broken tones, "To-day you are giving her all, are leading her on to a paradise of bliss. Oh, let me, too, do something for the beauteous one, whom I to-day give wholly to your keeping—she of whom I rob myself, whom I entrust to you!" O! Teubner, what sweet tears did I shed at this affectionate strife, thus lightening my heart that could scarce bear its excess of joy! William then led Ernst to me (it was as if I saw my father!), and he pressed the wreath upon my brow, moistened as it was by his and William's tears. And now they both raised me up (for I was kneeling before Ernst), and I lay for a few seconds in their arms. My brother signalled William to withdraw.

Dutton now enters. Half kneeling and in silence he kisses my hand, and leads me and Ernst to the chapel hard by, where I found William, Parsons, George, and Jackson, the Prince's faithful attendant. Ernst, taking the place of father, gave me away; he led me to the altar, and with Ernst and Dutton on either side we knelt down before the minister. William's responses were uttered in a clear and solemn tone, yet he trembled no less violently than myself. Indescribable were my feelings as, in the grey haze of morning, (it was between five and six o'clock,) I gave myself up wholly to my beloved. Was it the sacred ceremony that kept me from perishing from my mingled anguish and bliss? All onlookers wept with emotion. We rose, and now, as in this peaceful house of God William took me to his arms as wife, pressing his picture to my breast, reiterating his vows of eternal love—O! Teubner, heaven itself cannot yield a greater bliss! Then Wil-

liam embraced Dutton, Ernst and Parsons, thanking them with looks where words failed him. He motioned to his two faithful servants, and gave them his hand and mine to kiss; and both felt that he did them greater honour than if he had rewarded them with gold. After that, having led me back, he stayed with me alone for a quarter of an hour. Taking off the sash and wreath, he put on my hat for me, and then went half reverentially to the door. At this juncture he seemed a very god : all that which in this blessed time he said to me bore such thorough witness to his great, his noble, kingly heart, that I marvelled at the good fortune which suffered me to call this, ay this man, my own. I rushed after him, and, falling at his feet, kissed the hand he had given me at the altar. He quickly raised me. " I only, beloved wife," said he, " may kneel to *you* ; that is *my* place : calm, calm yourself. We must needs be so to-day. Whether or no Fate's chill

shadow fall on us, our bond of union is eternal—you are mine; and I, I am Caroline's blissful husband! Now, change your dress; I shall soon have to go, as I must make a *detour* coming back; but when you return, do not ride at a gallop; keep yourself safe for my sake, as in your dear life I have all my being."

Our companions afterwards partook of a light breakfast (*we* could not do so!), and on parting, although it was but for a few hours, the tears would come. By eight o'clock we were home again. At nine we had to join the court assembly in the ball-room, where William was to receive his birthday congratulations and would be the guest of his aunt, the Duchess of Brunswick. Now it strikes five. Here I must lay down my pen; this hour is one which I can only live through by myself alone.

* * * *

7 o'clock.

. . . I have lived through it by

myself, with William's picture and my thoughts of him. Unbroken peace seemed indispensable to me. I *had* to see him in this hour! O! do not blame me, dearest one; you know how long I have spared myself this enjoyment. Never, never shall I see the original again! . . . *Pain cannot destroy me!* I tremble too much to write, and yet I should so like to do it; it soothes me, and I fancy myself at your side.

10 o'clock.

Soon this day, awful in its happiness, will be over. Yes, I confess that now, now it is a terrible one, and this it will ever remain, unless through your joys it should at some time be shrouded in a veil of mournful sadness.

Strange as was of course your note to me, it was the only thing to-day which brought me a joyous moment; for even my beloved Jette added to my grief. I had to respond to her smile, never daring to tell of the deadly anguish that lay at

my heart. That I was all day in your thoughts, of this I felt sure, my darling son; two little things in your letter told me that you had not forgotten the 21st. Ah! how my heart beats unceasingly! I can scarcely hold the pen. Let me tell you about it; perhaps that may soothe me!

On arriving at the court, when I saw William standing there next his brother in all the splendour of his rank, and noticed how even reigning princes and princesses kept at respectful distance from him, my bosom swelled as I thought with rapture how near my heart stood to his. I felt not wholly unworthy of him; and yet at the same time I inwardly wished that he were a mere commoner. So deeply did I long for this that I could hardly keep back my tears. My father, for whom, indeed, William always showed a special regard, he to-day treated with lofty respect. As he saw him approaching to offer his congratulations, he went for-

ward to meet him, saying aloud, "Even in his day of honour a son should go to his father." Embracing him, he rested his head for some seconds upon the old man's shoulder. The latter was deeply touched. As we now gathered round the Prince, he only said : " Enough, enough," and hastily clasped Ernst to his heart.

People were accustomed to see our family treated with especial favour by all members of the royal house, and knew of the friendship that existed between William and Ernst ; thus this scene caused wonder only to the strangers who happened to be present.

I will not describe to you the festivities of the day. We yet managed once or twice to get a few words together in secret. He complained of a slight oppression at the chest, so this excused him from dancing. The company was numerous, the evening so lovely, the illuminations in avenue and thicket so enchanting, that I, like many another, was able to break away from the

dance, and we wandered about for hours together. We took our fill of happiness. About twelve o'clock Ernst persuaded me to go back with him to the house, when, on his unlocking the door of my boudoir, into which William had never had entrance, lo! there he stood and rushed towards me. How could I be angry with him, for had not I early that morning personally justified his every action? Ernst went back to keep watch with Dutton and George. The whole house was empty, as all the servants were either in the avenue or attending to the guests; my parents sat in duty bound at the card-table. Every one was occupied in some way or another, and Dutton told my uncle and the other gentlemen-in-waiting that the Prince wished to take a little rest. We had no intrusion to fear, and we passed two hours of heavenly bliss together—the first happy ones of a most happy married life: they were to be followed by many such. Oh! how safe, how blessedly calm I felt as I

lay in the arms of this noble man! We could never have believed it; yet so it was, our love, our mutual trust, had gained as it were in fervour and intensity. A gentle gloom surrounded us; there was only the shaded light of a single taper burning on a table. He said to me that already yesterday Ernst had promised this hour to him, to compensate for the sacrifices of the daytime, which otherwise he would not have had strength enough to have made. I went to my bedroom to fetch the pearl necklace that I had worn yesterday, and which he wished to have. He followed me with the light, and directly he entered the room, cried out, "Dear brother, to have done this!" And, on turning round, there was my bed all strewn with our favourite flowers! I blushed, for I thought it was not quite delicate of Ernst to do this, and then bring me like that to William. He saw this, and whispered to me, "He knows of my oath." Then, leading me to the bed, he kissed the coverlet and knelt down

with me before it. Oh, at no deathbed could there have been moments more holy than were these—never could there have been vows of greater purity and honour. Oh! all that we here promised, arm joined in arm, William, doubtless you have kept no less faithfully than I! Two o'clock struck; and now Ernst came to fetch us. He found us still upon our knees. Though we parted reluctantly, it was with a sweet calm in our hearts, for we now belonged wholly and entirely to each other.

What a delicious year we now lived through! We went from bliss to bliss; our joy grew ever higher.

You will have read my letter to Ernst, dearest Teubner, after I had been *his* bride for a year. We were once more in Pyrmont, on the anniversary of our wedding-day; his birthday was again celebrated with every ceremony, but all the guests were quickly driven homewards by a fearful storm. This year, in accordance with secret arrangements made by William and Ernst

we occupied a suite of rooms on one floor of a mansion, the gentlemen-in-waiting and the attendants being lodged in apartments immediately overhead. Without rousing suspicion, we could now pass many hours of the night in each other's company, which made up for the enforced restraint of the day ; yet here, too, the noble one showed his nobility ; he kept his vow. On that evening—after he had been for a year the husband of the joyous Caroline—on account of the storm, we were able to meet sooner than usual. The year of probation was at an end. On the 5th of August, the same day on which in that unlooked way we had met in the chapel, I released him of his vow ; only until that day I had asked him to spare me. As I saw him enter, I shuddered in a transport of mingled love and fear. A flash of lightning just at that moment lit up his figure. I did not rush to him as was my wont . . . I had not the . . . O God ! O God ! what folly is this that I am saying !

Good night, Teubner, dearest Teubner ; I cannot go on. May Heaven grant you sweet sleep. Perhaps my prayer will be heard, and tears will come to my relief. Oh ! why cannot I stay the fearful beating of my heart by resting it upon his, so true, so childlike ! Full terrible it is for me to stand thus alone, and yet I am forced, forced to flee from my recollections, from myself, from my heart ! God give *you* rest ! And to you, too, man of my first and only love. Whither shall I escape from myself ? . . .

* * * *

WEDNESDAY, *August 22nd.*

This night I went up to your room ; yet here, too, I could find no rest. I had hoped so much for this year, and yet, I know not, was it perchance the presentiment that I should never again live through these days ? Was it this that caused me such fearful disquietude ? I tried to pray, but sinful tears triumphed over my de-

votions. Low in the dust I struggled for help, yet no angel-voice spoke words of comfort to me. I thought of my Jette, who had suffered also upon the self-same couch at which I now knelt. I thought of my Teubner, who often and often had found rest and slumber thereon—but in vain ! I could not endure the silent void of this soulless solitude ; I rushed to the balcony. The night was cool, the moon rarely showed through her misty veil, but all Nature in her solemnity seemed to speak thus to my raging heart :

When from the best, the dearest thou must sever,
Poor heart, when bitter sacrifice is thine,
Nature's kind arms shall give thee welcome ever,
Safely in them may'st trustfully recline.

'Tis she shall draw the poison from thy sore,
Yielding a balsam for its raging smart ;
She, too, shall weep what time thine eyes run o'er ;
In her there ever beats a constant heart !

I could have wandered abroad through wood and over mountain, could have thus flung myself still more into the arms of Nature :

My soul from life's loud din did seek release ;
And, quitting vain and earthly hopes, craved rest
With help from Heaven : in tender love and peace
Heaven gently drew the lone one to her breast.

Vain life of shadows ! Ever more away !
A loving heart, once broken, may but sigh
'Midst dreams and yearning hopes which day by day
It feels the more it cannot satisfy.

And wilt thou find the rest that thou dost crave ?
Or shall the end of mourning only be
In that chill place, the dark and silent grave,
On which the dews of night fall peacefully ?

Yea, even so, there is a rest at hand,
A port for spent and storm-toss'd lives, where all
'Neath shady groves and spreading palms shall land,
And on Love's heart at last triumphant fall.

As it now struck four o'clock from the
clock tower, I shuddered. It was four
strokes such as these that had called *him*
away, on that morning, from the arms of
the most blessed of wives—but I was able
to regain my composure.

Caroline to Teubner.

Friday, November 9th, 18—.

If this yearning heart do not deceive me, I shall to-day see you once more! How hard it is to be away from you! How sad yesterday was for me, the night how gloomy and dark! Nor did I once permit myself to write to you. A bitter, bitter sacrifice this, to deny myself even this refuge also; yet I have solemnly pledged myself not to wound the heart of my noble Teubner. Only then, when all shall have been irrevocably fixed—only then, shall I again hasten with all my anguish to the faithful loving heart of my son, for whom my love changes not. If my ghost did not appear to you yesternight, then boldly deny belief to every tale respecting apparitions from the spirit-world. Teubner, Heinrich, William, Ernst,

father, mother, it was with you all I
passed the night! Though you are all
yet far, so far away, I draw my only com-
fort from the thought that perhaps to-day
I shall yet see the sole one I love.

As the faint dawn-light told of coming day,
Sleep found me, worn with watching thro' the night,
In a dim land of dreams so far away,
I seem'd to see him, wearied with the fight.

Night had come down; all warriors lay sleeping;
Hush'd was the camp; by a dim-burning fire,
With one true friend he sate, lone vigil keeping,
Full pale he seem'd in that pale scene and dire.

As sank the sad moon down behind the hill,
By her wan ray I yet could clearly trace
The hot tears on his cheek; and there was still
The stamp of sorrow set upon his face.

I marked the throbbing of his troubled heart
That seem'd athirst for comfortable rest;
And Ernst, most faithful friend, shared in the smart
And anguish of the man he loved the best.

A smile of matchless sweetness seem'd to haunt
His beauteous lips, where, too, lay vague regret:
"Dost thou still scorn Love's faithful covenant?"
Thus rang his witching tones:—I hear them yet.

"O loved, O best beloved, draw anigh,
Now surely shall my woe change thy decree;

Here shalt thou find me, all devoted, I,
To gentler joys, to calmer misery."

His voice died on the air. "Dost give no sign
Of all my future holds of dark and dread?"
I yearn'd to clasp the breast that welcomed mine—
When, lo! the morning; and my dream had fled.

In this, dear boy, there is more than
mere romance!

Towards evening.

Oh, Meineke will yet be my death with
the ill-temper which he vents upon me in
the most distressing manner. What have
I done, I, that Heaven should set so great
a burden upon my shoulders? If only my
good Meineke knew how miserable this
sullen humour of his makes me, whose one
aim in life is to bring him happiness, oh, I
am sure, he would act otherwise! And yet
he has all affection for me; yes, and a per-
petual dread also that he may lose my love.

* * * *

Saturday, November 10th.

I waited vainly yesterday for my beloved
son; and yet may-be it was as well that

he came not, even though his mother's heart were to ache thereby. Meineke was in such a state of depression that even to you he would hardly have given a friendly welcome ; he repelled all comers, and his faithful wife was the only one who bore him company. But as evening came, a terrible headache and sickness made me feel so ill, that, had you seen me, my good Teubner, you would indeed have been shocked. In spite of this, as I was alone the whole evening with Meineke, I succeeded in soothing his restless spirit. We spoke much of you ; and your dear father has such fear that you will feel just as wretched as did he when for a time forced to desist from study.

Shall I then to-day see you once more, son of my bosom ? To-day too, the very day on which I for the last time saw my Heinrich in perfect health. Oh, what better balm to my aching heart than to gaze on you !

Caroline to Ernst.

PYRMONT, *Tuesday night,*

11th August, 179—.

How is it then, foolish boy, that you choose *me* to give you information upon the subjects canvassed by your respective friends, the Messieurs Franz von Alten and Werner von dem Busche? How earnestly you looked at me when at parting you enjoined me to do this; and how much else might you not have confided to me when we were together early this morning, had not the unruly Prince William taken fright at your snorting Pollux, and so torn me away from your horse! Really, you know, he came quite at the wrong time—the Prince, I mean. What had he got to do there in the avenue at so early an hour? And why must he inter-

rupt the tender leave-taking of brother and sister, who were only enjoying each other's society for a few hours? He knows, does he not, that my Ernst and I (well, a third person has certainly to be counted in) are one? Why should he thrust himself 'twixt brother and sister? Yet—to the matter in hand! In truth, my friend, the offering I bring is no mean one.

Only listen : I had instructed them to call me at two o'clock, in order that I might have an hour's talk with you before you started. Then I went for a ride with my father, William, Dutton, Miss Blair and my uncle, as far as the Götterberg, returning on foot ; and so heavenly was it to-night, that I have been walking up and down until half-past eleven in the avenue. Midnight has now come ; my writing materials lie about in the greatest confusion—no paper, no ink, a pen that I have had to mend with the scissors ; and that fellow Reinhard has had the impudence to carry

off my desk to mother's room, as she wanted to write there to-day. I don't dare to go across the passage to fetch it; it might be thought that I was in quest of adventures.

To-morrow the Duchess is to give a grand *déjeuner* to her dear nephew William; in the evening there is the ball at the Arnswalds', and I am going merely from sisterly love, my eyes sad, my cheeks pale — standing there among all the women dazzling in all the charms that art and nature lend; I shall yawn, shall look foolish at having no partner, shall dance badly, and——. No; I really could not endure that! You know that Hagemann lodges next door to me. He gave me such a fright the other day, before I knew where he lived. What an idiot, to be sure! always studying his parts at night, thinking to gull us with them on the following evening! To-morrow he is going to do Hamlet; and now for the twentieth time I can hear him reciting that divine mono-

logue—each time, as I think, wrongly. I cannot help always listening, and saying it word for word after him ; I really think I should help him out, if it were not for my reputation. What a miserable letter this will be with all these interruptions ! But come, let us be serious ; I can see you knit your brow, so, kissing away the furrows, I gravely hasten to a graver theme. But you must confess that it seems rather absurd for me to have to account to *you* for three cavaliers shewing so manifest a desire to break their necks. Even to you, whom they love as themselves, they will give no explanation, and I—but enough, the matter has troubled you, you are concerned about me, and after all I suppose it is I who can tell you the most about it :—

It is just a week ago that Count Schwicheldt gave his pic-nic to the *beau monde* of Pymont. You know the heavenly spot I mean, in the Sennerwald ; everything was set out there *en prince*—

ah! and you know, too, what a glorious time William and I—you and I, William, you and I!—once had together here. I grew uneasy; it seemed to me as though this holy spot were being desecrated; and that William shared this feeling I could see from his restlessness, and from his anxiety to get away. The greater part of the company had come on horseback, and it was proposed for the Prince's benefit to make an excursion into the adjoining country. Count Schwicheldt as host headed the party, and led us by a charming route, quite unknown to us, to—picture my horror!—to the romantic little chapel wherein a year since Parsons had made us one, in your presence! William and I had assiduously avoided this place, and we had purposed to go there first on the 21st of August, to that sacred spot, where we should solemnly renew our vows of every day. William, who rode in silence beside us, looked up suddenly. Grasping my bridle, he vaulted from the saddle, and

this was a signal for the whole company to dismount. He lifted me from my horse, and led me up to the chapel door. As the key could not at once be found, he ran to fetch it himself, leaving me on Dutton's arm. How my heart beat! How often his lordship whispered to me: "compose yourself, for God's sake compose yourself!" But who can lay commands upon a heart that loves? William now hurried into the chapel, all the guests following. I saw only him—saw him as he flung himself before the altar, and kissed the steps, whereon we had knelt a year before. I grew pale, and could hardly understand Dutton, who, quickly turning round with me, exclaimed, "No, we must have a search for it," and thereupon explained to those following that I was suddenly overcome at finding that I had lost my diamond shawl-pin which the Queen had given me. I had not got this on, for I never wear it when out riding; however, I finally saw what he meant.

At the chapel door we met Franz Alten and Werner Busche. You know how those two have got it into their heads that I shall some day or other belong to one of them ; you know, too, how they are the best of friends all the while, only seeking to outdo each other in serving me. They both assured me that they would find the missing trinket, and, begging Dutton to stay with me, they hurried off on horse-back.

When Dutton saw that I had revived somewhat, he re-entered the chapel, where he found William still before the altar, and all the guests in great amazement. Dutton entreated him for Heaven's sake to calm himself ; soon he came back to me docile as a lamb. But as he helped me on to my horse, he pressed me with such vehemence to his breast, that I could scarcely stifle a cry. He whispered that he dare not trust himself to ride next to me, or his feelings would be sure to betray him ; and Dutton informed the company

out loud that the Prince intended riding by himself, and would take it as a favour if they would dispense with all ceremony.

Oh! how long the way seemed to me, without sight of my William! I fell into a reverie, from which I was roused by the voice of Dutton, who had faithfully managed that none of the uninitiated should notice how much I had been the cause of William's behaviour.

When we reached the avenue, I saw Alten and Busche already at our door, so I rode on ahead to make my apologies, and to tell them that I was mistaken, as, on reflection, I found that I had not put on the shawl-pin after all. They both came forward to help me to dismount. All of a sudden William galloped up, and leaping from his horse, he almost tore me from the saddle. With deep passion in his voice he said, half under his breath, "Oh! to-day you must not let yourself be touched by any hand but mine!" As he was doing this, my picture, which he

always wore, fell out from his coat and dropped into my bosom. For him to see this, and pluck it thence with his own hand, for a moment to press it fervently against my breast, and then to thrust it back into his own, was the work of an instant. I trembled again. Franz and Werner stood close by, and only our horses prevented the rest of the company from witnessing this extraordinary scene. I managed to stammer out my excuses, and William led me rapidly to my father's room, who had, however, gone out again. Here he flung himself upon my breast, and in his arms all, all was forgotten—heaven and earth, father, mother, you, yes, even you—I thought but of William and of our love. Words we had not; they would have been sacrilege. We never even heard Dutton, who suddenly stood beside us, and tapping William on the shoulder, with warmth entreated us to be firm and composed, and not to expose ourselves and

our sacred love to the gaze of the outside world. Yet he was of opinion that it was now necessary to apprise my father of the one secret which we had ever kept from him. For a long while we gazed at him vacantly ; and I could see him brush away a tear. By degrees he called us back to dull reality. It was three o'clock : I had to change my dress. William's powder had made my dark-green riding-habit look not unlike the smock-frock of a miller. This, when Dutton smilingly pointed out, my dear old incorrigible William exclaimed, "Ah! Dutton, you're not so far wrong—my place is not there; I ought only to rest on the beloved one's bosom."

At that moment my father entered with General Busche, and Franz and Werner in their rear. With his finger he secretly chid me, while good old father Busche, smiling at William, said : "Well, are you as much in love with the girl as I am? The little sorceress has bewitched me—and my Werner too, I believe."

You can think how great was our confusion, and it increased when William said: "A precious stone needs to be set in fine gold; and yet no setting can ever be worthy of it!"

Julchen now came in, all ready dressed, with the two Countesses Vinx, and Melusine and Louise Kielmannsegge. They were shocked at seeing me there in my habit. So these five girls dragged me off and proceeded to dress me by sheer force. Apparently, they were delighted at the result of their efforts. I seemed really like the little animal which is always led about for show at Whitsuntide. I said nothing, but breaking away from them I locked myself into my bedroom with Schilder. In ten minutes I was back again among those laughing, shrieking girls, who could hardly believe in my metamorphosis. I wore William's costly Indian dress of pure white, which you always call a *robe*, and my blue waistband with the gold clasp, a garland of

white roses in my hair, and such a bunch of them at my breast. Lilli Vinx cried : "She really means to eclipse us all ;" and every one agreed that she spoke the truth. I led them in a body up to my mother's pier-glass, asking to know who of them would change places with me. You know how far beneath them I am, and they all looked somewhat sheepish at this. Julchen, their queen, as she playfully aimed a blow at me, said : "I know this much, that she would not change places with any of *us* !" while Lilli, kissing me, whispered, "Happy girl!"—all hints, these, which served to increase my discomfiture.

Julchen told me afterwards that Lilli had given her an account of the scene in the chapel (for Julchen, you must know, had driven home with my parents before the rest of us rode back), and she asked if the loss of the shawl-pin had been the real cause of my consternation and bewilderment. When you come, my good old fellow, then we must hold a grand

confab together! Your stay here was too short a one; at a time like this, nothing should interfere with our happiness. William wants you and Dutton to decide as to how we ought to act in regard to my father; whether we ought first to write to England, or speak with him on the subject before doing so. O Ernst, how is it possible that bliss such as this could ever have an end! What would become of me? Death would then seem a very messenger from heaven! But to return to my story, else my beating heart will force me to drop my pen.

My mother had already driven the twenty paces to the dining-hall with Spörken, the chamberlain, and our noble old father was leading the six nymphs, three on each side, down the avenue. There stood Alten Busche at the door. As we came up, I heard the latter say in a very piqued tone, "In the *choicest* gold," etc., etc.

The Duchess, who has such regard

to my bosom with the other roses that I wore.

William took in my aunt to dinner, and just as he was passing me, Franz unluckily remarked to Werner, in a manner so bitter and piqued as I had never noticed in him, Alten the gentle, before: "That little scene just now—the resting on her bosom, and the wreath of white roses, etc., etc.,—can't you put it into verse?"

William glanced round at Alten in a rage, to whom Werner was talking vehemently. I was on Dutton's arm, and he not understanding German sufficiently, asked me what it was all about, so I told him that Franz Alten had made some trenchant remarks as to the scene which took place that morning, as also about the speech he had heard on entering my father's room, and the roses which I wore, remarks that William had sufficiently understood.

Dutton, quiet as he was, grew excited. "*Pour l'amour de Dieu, sauvez le Prince!*" he said.

I implored him only to be quiet for the present ; he must see what restraint even our passionate friend was exercising over himself on account of the Duchess.

We were hardly half through dinner when I saw William writing a *billet*, which when I saw him give to Jackson, I thought it was meant for Alten. But it came to Dutton, and was just a line instructing him to arrange a meeting with Franz and Werner for five o'clock in the *Marienfeld*. As Lottchen Plato had given me a note just shortly before, I was able to write back without any one noticing it. I wrote, begging William, as he loved my life, to let me speak with him first. On reading this, he nodded ; and soon after, we rose from table.

In the bustle which then always ensues, I was able to slip away unnoticed by any but Dutton and William, and to hide myself in the little copse to the right of the far end of the avenue. In five minutes Dutton was with me, and we were

joined immediately after by Alten and Busche. I grew terrified, as I knew that William was not far off. Alten imagined his gaze to be the cause of my alarm. Werner led him up to me, when on one knee he knelt to kiss my hand, saying everything that could be said in extenuation of an offence such as his had been. In this Busche helped him, while Dutton was silent, though he nodded kindly to me as I gave my hand to Alten by way of pardon. At that moment William rushed forward, and seizing Franz by the shoulders, cried out, "Heaven must have prompted you to do this. Had she not now given you her hand in sign of pardon, by evening we two might no longer have been alive!" Busche and Alten would have spoken, but he silenced them; and stepping backwards, with that royal look and lofty bearing that so specially distinguishes him, he said,—nay, but I will not myself sound my own praise. All that my William would have uttered at a time

such as this, who can know this better than can you?

Both Busche and Alten were touched (they are more in the dark than ever now); but, as two noble-minded fellows, they were ashamed of their error; for both of them have known me from childhood. Why, they must both know how the best of men—my Ernst—loves and prizes me! They can see how Dutton appreciates me, and must know by experience that his is a regard which, if unmerited, he can withhold even from queens. As they were going, William gave them each his hand, and promised that you should know nothing of the matter; I, too, had meant to be silent about it to you. As, however, from their behaviour, you have detected that these three men had something which they kept back from you, and as you are uneasy about your own Caroline, *I have told you all*, knowing beforehand that as I have forgiven, so you will forgive.

Scarcely had they gone when the hot tears fell from William's eyes. He, too, knelt down and pressed my hands to his face. "Oh! my eternally loved wife," he cries, "how much you have to suffer for your William! To-morrow I write to my mother!" Raising him I threw myself into his arms, told him all that the most ardent affection could inspire, and begged him, when he should grow more calm, to take me back to his house and to make no comment upon my absence that evening.

I felt that I had need of rest. So exhausted was I, that I could scarcely stand upright. He tremblingly implored me, for God's sake, to let him stay with me; and what difficulty had Dutton and I in convincing him that this was impossible? He at last gave in, and they led me by a back way through a little garden to our house. Under the *berceau* he once more knelt, adjuring me (Dutton had stayed at the garden gate)—Yet no, Ernst, mine own, forgive me,—the figure of my dear,

darling, ardent enthusiast, who to the world can show so frigid an exterior, might seem ridiculous even to you, and the very thought exasperates me. No, your eye even may not penetrate into the recesses of love's sanctity, neither is your affection as that of William; yet were there any love that could be matched with his and mine, then would that love be yours.

I sent word to Julchen through George that severe bleeding at the nose had forced me to go back home. She soon came to me with my father and Melusine: they found me already in bed. I quieted them all, and remained alone by myself tranquilly nursing my joy. I have need of restful times such as these; without them, I could not survive the exuberance of my bliss. Can such joy be lasting? Oh, this ought I not to ask. Do but tell me, Ernst, how I could before endure my existence, when a love such as this, ever since I had power to feel, became straight-

way a necessity? I only now wholly understand why I detested all my suitors, and why my beloved mother so often said, "You will one day be either unspeakably happy, or unspeakably wretched."

O mother, dearest mother, if you could now but be witness of my bliss, a bliss that has not ceased for nigh two years and which—impossible though it often seems—gains ever in sublimity!

* * * *

Wednesday Night.

Early this morning I fell asleep over this page of my letter. George does not start for Hanover until to-morrow, so I am able to write you a line or two more, if I can still find any paper, for I have again forgotten my writing-desk.

Well, you see, Ernst, what I prophesied has come to pass. I, the passionate dancer, could only dance once, yet (let me be straightforward) I did not wish to dance any more. Before our meeting to-day in the avenue, William had

already written to me saying that he was suffering from sore throat, yet, trifling though it was, Trampel had prohibited his dancing that evening. *Avis au lecteur.* When we had assembled in my father's room I complained that my usual attack of bleeding at the nose had kept me awake all night, and that I had now got palpitation of the heart. From writing to you last night I only got an hour's rest, which gave me so heated a look that I was readily believed, and my father at once added, "I shall go and ask Trampel if you may dance to-day." This was all I wanted; I must get forbidden to dance before it should become known that the Prince were unwell. The Duchess had hardly welcomed us in the avenue, when my father took me to Trampel, that most humble and submissive of men. And now my heart began to beat in good earnest, for I neither saw William, nor my uncle, nor any other of his cavaliers. My old friend Trampel at once put on his

doctor's face, and was heartily grieved to have to forbid my dancing, though he knew how much I had looked forward to this ball at his Excellency's. I looked as rueful as I could; and my father did his best to comfort me.

At last William arrived. His pallor terrified me. At his appearance there was a general rush, and an hour passed before *I* was fortunate enough to say a few words to him. Arnswald was inconsolable at William's not dancing. When after breakfast every one went out driving or riding, he had no little trouble in managing to be alone with his true love. Miss Blair stopped with me and Lady Hinxley also. But the latter soon flew into a passion with her lord, and departed in a rage, he following her. Render then went off with his beautiful betrothed to the little coppice, and William and Dutton, my uncle and I, sat there by ourselves. All of a sudden old Jonquières came rushing down the

avenue to ask uncle Fritz if he would come with him to Meinberg, as—well, it was some question or other about a military position—I don't know anything further. The Prince was glad to be quit of them, and they were barely out of sight when he led Dutton and myself back to our rooms. Dutton took a book, and William and I went into my father's cabinet, overjoyed at thus having this day to ourselves—to-day, the 12th of August, the day on which a year ago I had consented to become his. He put his hand on my heart, asking, "Will this heart ever beat truly for me?" I swore to him that it should, amid a rain of glowing kisses. Oh! and this I *can* do, for I feel, for I know that my love will abide for ever! Destruction, though it threaten all things mortal, may not touch *my* love. I fear neither time nor age. O God, if I could but tell William all, all that I feel! But he, the godlike one, does he not know of it, does he not feel it

as I do, does not all tell me that *he and I are one, and that we can only be one*? Know you a love such as his? Know you a man who honours his wife as William honours me? Know you a man who, so denying himself, can yet daily and hourly love with such growing ardour? When his ardent look lights a kindred flame in my eyes, when my ravished ear hears but his voice, when I am like to breathe out my soul upon his burning lips and give myself utterly, wholly to him; when in moments of supreme passion he clasps me to his breast; when, undisturbed by aught, our surroundings are clean forgotten—oh! then, Ernst, then too, angels could look unblushingly upon the purity of our love. And I, I am his wife, and his hot blood throbs in every vein. O Ernst, I feel certain that in the joy to be got from a love at once true and pure there is no sting of death. Your late allusion to this pained me. How should I fear that this my love should be slain by

desire? Of this I cannot now speak ; but this I would now beg of you—always be silent regarding this. William and I are to-day wholly of one mind—nothing more lies between us, yet there is still a dense veil that hides our love secret even from our dearest and most trusted friends. We were alone for four hours, yet to us they seemed but a few moments ere Dutton knocked gently at the door. William continued to lie quietly with his head on my shoulder, and only called out, “Come in, faithful friend, come and help me to bear my happiness !” Dutton, the melancholy noble-minded enthusiast, knelt before us, and kissed our linked hands. William, raising him, put his right arm round him and the other round me, and exclaimed : “Now, Ernst only is wanting ; and then, welcome death, or—let us thus live on for ever !”

There were tears in all our eyes. Dutton was the first to recover himself, and begged William to come away with him.

As he went I told him that I, too, was not going to dance that evening, which greatly pleased him. At last we said farewell, and now—how could I desecrate this hour by thus talking to you of gaieties? Instead of dancing (excepting just the minuet with the stiff old minister), I played whist with William, Dutton, and Lady Hinxley. Fortune so willed it that I always had William as my partner, and this evening, too, had its moments of bliss for us. You must be back here again by the 21st; William will write to you himself. You will have to help us, or we shall not be able on this happy day to get to the chapel, as my beloved one's birthday is to be celebrated with much ceremony. You must come; I cannot do without you. See, Ernst, how much you are to me, when with William beside me I even miss you! What a day will that be! What fresh joys will then be mine!

O Pyrmont, delightful spot, where otherwise I have passed so many a dreary

hour, what have you now become to me !
O trees, and shrubs, and stones, you
are one and all endowed with life ! Ever
wilt thou be for me as a home of the
gods ! Oh ! may thy healing springs
yield life and health to the whole of
suffering humanity. May—ah ! there is
George, to fetch my letter, which he is to
give into your hands only. Forgive your
own Caroline for all this disorderly
scribble.

Caroline to Teubner.

BLANSKO, *June 21st,*

2 o'clock a.m.

I have spent a part of the night in writing to my sister, and now I shall wait for the messenger in order to give him my letter myself. May your rest be calm, dear Teubner! Jettchen slumbers sweetly, and in her dreams she has twice pleaded to go with you to her mother, yet in calm and loving tones. Thus, too, in sleep her mind occupies itself with the two beings that are dearest to her. Oh! that my prayers could draw down the richest of blessings upon both of you—that I could give you that peace of which you now stand in need. Your fears exceed your hopes; but, where there is true love, is not that ever so? There

must yet be allowance given for the peculiarly harassing circumstances in which we find ourselves and by which we are influenced, even though we will not confess to it. But let us jointly employ all our strength, let us use energy and patience in helping us forward along the troublous road of life and of fortune. *Your mood does so much to influence Jettchen*; she only lives in her Teubner and in her parents. Oh! try, then, from your love to her, to calm yourself. You already do so much for the dear girl; perhaps you may be able to achieve this also. Do not face the future so sadly and gloomily; it will surely be fraught with greater happiness than is the present or the past. Oh! let your mutual love be undying, keep each of you in health, and all else may yet be ordered for the best. And even though a brief separation is before us, if it come not now, and if it come not all too suddenly, we shall not get harm thereby. Oh! well for me that I accustomed my

children so early in life to bear evils that are necessary, that are inevitable! And I shall know how to make the parting seem easier for her; I shall hide my own suffering that hers may thus be soothed; and you shall on no account be separated for long, my good Teubner. I have a ceaseless interest in your happiness. Solely on your account have I now written to my sister. It is good to have several roads laid open to us. Yet this is only in the event of an emergency; we shall stay here as long as we can in peace and quietness, if only my good Meineke becomes better able to bear what must be borne. He both loves and values you; and you must grow more and more attached to him—must give him your trust and your love. Jettchen, too, is so good at doing this.

I have just been out on the balcony to watch the moon, as it sank behind a ridge of gloomy clouds. As I looked, I thought me of all the points of light and

gladness that there had been in my life. They, too, are now sunk and buried in the past. Yet why should I not hope that in another region, even though in another form perhaps, they will at some time re-appear! Then I thought of you and of Jettchen; from you only, my beloved ones, can I hope to get this joy—all else is dead for me. Therefore do not be anxious about my present lot. It is oftentimes a sad one, owing to those with whom I am obliged to live; yet it would only be then thoroughly unendurable were my heart to know no throb of secret anguish. The gnawing pain within, 'tis that which makes it easier for me to look above and away from mere external circumstances; and I found here a friend, a confidant whom I for many a long year had wholly missed. Is not this joy for me, Teubner? Do you doubt it? Oh! then you can have no conception of the torments which devour my bosom. Yes, in truth, it is a very strange matter, the gaining of man's con-

fidence. Towards you my trust is quite unbounded ; and since the time of that fearful parting no friendship has brought me such healthful influence as has yours. Noble friends I had ; yet I shuddered at the thought of letting them see into my secret. Nevertheless, to you I gladly show all my heart. I miss here much that is needed both for body and for soul, yet I have found something which is an ample recompense, something that I had never even sought, for I felt sad and sorrowful. I would have been glad could I have kept you here the whole night through ; generally at such times I shun even my children, in order that I may be alone with my grief.

I wished to forget that to-day is the 21st of June, once a fearful though a blissful day for me. Yet I lack the power—I only give you my promise, dearest ones, to watch over myself to-day. I will control my sorrow—will keep this burning heart of mine within its prison, for I am

still needful for your happiness. On this day my father saved William from committing suicide; on this evening, to prevent greater misfortune, he gave me the permission which William craved upon his knees, that I might act in the matter just as I thought best. My father had separated us on becoming convinced of our mutual passion. Imaginary illness had to be the pretext, and my father wrote to England. Words cannot describe what we suffered; yet entreaties and prayers were useless to move him. One evening, when there was an assembly at court, and my father had pretended to be unwell, in order to avoid having to take my mother and sister there, William burst into his room. At this we were all terrified; and on my father's insisting that I should withdraw, on his absolutely refusing to look with favour upon our love, and on his demanding from me that I should wholly renounce William, the latter rushed madly away. A little while after, my

father turning very pale, grasped his hat and hurried out, locking me into his room. I yet shiver and quake as I think of those two fearful hours which I spent on that 21st of June. Then the two came back white and trembling, and my father now consented to let me do as I liked until news should come from William's parents. William in his last letter reminds me of this scene. It was then that he gave me a lock of his hair, and took one from me. I seldom look at it, yet it is always there, next to his picture, at my heart, and from this even death cannot part me. At some moment of leisure and calm you shall see both of them, but it will be only you who, besides Ernst and my father—Ah! I grow perplexed! And when William finally went away in a state of intense happiness, then I learnt from my father how that he had been almost too late. For long it was thought that he and William had fought a duel, and he never lost the scar upon his right hand. Oh! peace, peace, how often

have I kissed that scar! How often have I longed——

And now, Teubner, I will give you proof that I am in earnest, in solemn earnest, when I say that I mean to try and preserve my life for Jettchen and for you. I could not, could not resist it; I had to kiss the sacred lock of hair that William on this day gave me. As I unclasped the locket, out fell the paper which lay inside, which, a year later, in a glad hour of mirth—in love's full enjoyment—oh! peace! let me keep silence! It has not been opened by me since I have been here, for these locks, hidden away with those words that I wrote in the happiest hour of my whole life, oh! what marvellous power have they exercised over me! William made two knots exactly alike; one for me and one for him. And now I have undone them, and, Teubner, I grew well-nigh desperate! No, no! never shall I see them again—never again open this paper! As my senses came back I

would have burnt it, but my trembling hand prevented me. I have sworn a solemn vow ; it must be destroyed, for I must live, still ! To Meineke my pledge of duty needs to be held sacred ; there is no greater hindrance to my fidelity than this lock of hair ! Do *you* destroy it for me !

Caroline to Ernst.*

BLANSKO, 181—.

. . . : And now, Ernst dear, shall you be angry with me if I tell you that the enclosure contained William's letter *with unbroken seal*! Oh! I knew that it had become sacred, by having passed through your hands, and that it would be no crime for me to receive it. I knew, too, that it would be only to save William's life, only in a matter of vital importance, that you would permit yourself to bring him and me again into communication. I do not blame you; yet if I could but describe to you the state of mind to which this letter reduced me—I was already very ill—you would certainly approve of my resolve (made at the cost of so much pain) that I

* Fragment. The earlier portion wanting.

would not read it. Had I been by myself, I should probably have died, for I was *very* weak ; yet friendship, like some good angel, was at hand to strengthen me with gentle comfort. Heaven sent me this saving spirit, my noble Teubner, of whom I told you above, sent him to again guide me through a sad epoch of my life ; for it is not in the sacrifices which cruel necessity has forced upon me in my love, that the *last* drops in my cup of misery consist. Let not my wounds be again torn open—not even by his beloved hand ; they are such as can never be healed ! To you let me confess it, that even now I struggle with myself. Let me confess that the lines penned by that dear hand have been blotted out by my tears—lines which so strangely move me ; and that this letter, so fascinating, so seductive as it is, has but just now been covered by my ardent kisses. Let my confession thus made to the noblest of human beings, be my punishment ; yet let it convince you that I am forced to

act as I act! All castles in the air thus rashly built by my yet glowing fancy must be irrevocably set in ruins. Alas! man but seldom confesses to himself the object of his hopes, and when, as he thinks, they are all well buried beneath a cloud of humility and resignation, the rosy dawn of hope still gleams through it, and only after long fighting with fate does its light grow wholly dim.

The dear letter is in your hands by now. On the back of it you can clearly see through the thin paper this question, "Wife of my youth, are we then for ever parted? Am I too——" My eye caught these words to-day, and I quickly put the letter aside that I might read no further; yet to you, *to you*, Ernst dearest, I must give an answer to this question. No, no; the better elements in our nature remain unsevered; they will ever mingle lovingly, wherever they may be.

Love that is real lasts on eternally, whether in days of fortune or of want.

Never can his image be effaced from my memory ; it shall ever stay there as the idol of my silent tears. Yet parted we must be ; on earth we can never again belong the one to the other. If it were not that I lived in my two children, had I not sacred duties to fulfil towards them as towards my Meineke, I should pass the remainder of my sad life in solitude, holding aloof from the world ; and all my desire would be set upon the grave, for that is but the cradle of a better life, in which, on awaking, we shall become for ever one.

O Ernst, Ernst, how broken in spirit I am ! I faithfully performed all that duty bade me do. Mine was not merely an effort, an attempt ; I strove with all my force of soul for a victory that should bring about the contentment of others through the destruction of my own happiness. Of late the past has not, as formerly, robbed me utterly and entirely of *all* my peace and joy ; there is now but a

melancholy, bitter-sweet remembrance of the dear ones, lost to me thus early ; it encourages me, this, to become ever better and more worthy of them ; but to-day I feel—God ! with what pain do I feel ! that the love in this glowing heart has never grown cold, and that I must carefully avoid anything which could tend to fan the flame. Oh ! away, away with this letter, that—to you alone be it said !—has power to make me neglectful of every duty !

How vividly do the last three weeks of our companionship now stand before my eyes, and more especially the last day on which I saw *him* ! You know how I had resolved to separate myself from William, and how at my entreaty he went to London ; how my excellent father was afraid that my nerves would suffer by it all, which made him wish to go with me by Paderborn and Hoxter to Cassel, in order to take me out of myself ; and how we were forced to stop at Driburg, where I became suddenly and violently ill. You know,

too, how William, as soon as he heard from Dutton of our journey, could be kept back by nothing, and how, with the consent of his mother, who had promised to take his part with his father, he hastened to Germany. It was on the 8th of November that my father sat at my bedside, and besought me to keep true to my resolve; for I yet wavered, as I grew the more convinced that the bond that united me to William was of the closest kind. The more distinctly I felt within me the pledge of his love, the more persuaded I was that it would be wrong to rob my child before its birth of its father. The dusk of twilight served to hide my tears. Some one suddenly hurried up the steps. My heart beat violently, and the next moment William flung himself upon my bed, covering me with tears and kisses. My father, amazed, tried to raise him. Holding me firmly in his arm, he threw to my father his pocket-book. I have never read that letter of the Queen's to him, but to me she wrote,

that she, "trusting fully the promise of one honourable woman to another, had sent her son once more to me without fear, for she knew that I should faithfully send him back again to his mother, to his duties, to his country." There were tears in my father's eyes, as, shaking his venerable head, he went out and left us two together.

You know how desolate Driburg is during the autumn and winter ; you know, also, that the only servant we had with us was our faithful George (the friend of our youthful days), and that therefore we could nowhere have been more undisturbed than here. Brandes was the most reserved of doctors, and was besides greatly indebted to our family, so we could now drain the cup of joy to its very bottom, fearless of all discovery. William never left my bedside by day or night, and his unspeakable rapture at knowing himself a father could only be compared with the terrible anguish that we both suffered as on the 12th of November, the first joy of motherhood

and kisses and faint love-murmurings. But peace, peace! I cannot regret it! Ernst, beloved Ernst, a second life shall heal this soul of the wounds that the first has given it! But, if it be possible, you must love our William now even more than ever, now that you know more fully about those last happy days of ours. Long ago you wished me to tell you of them, but I could only give you a vague general account; and William himself can have told you nothing, as you wrote to me that you were anxious to spare him that terrible pain. Besides, it was only from me that you could hear how noble the beloved one was and remained. Now, too, you will know the contents of the glass that William prizes so, and hides even from you, about which you wrote: "William said to me to-day, 'Only my Caroline can solve you this riddle;—ask her, for she will now entrust to her beloved brother what formerly she had not power to tell him.'" Words

of comfort, *these* ! O William, still, still you live for me !!

On the evening of the 29th of November, Lord Dutton came from Hanover to accompany William as far as Stade. He could not keep from tears, for he had guessed my resolution—he knew us and our grief. William and I remained together for one day more, as the two friends were to start at five o'clock on the morning of the 1st of December. He held me the whole while in his arms, and I embraced him with all the strength of my love and of my grief, and once more rested upon the beloved breast that was not destined to create happiness for me. That sweet timidity, that virgin modesty, with which I, even when his wife, had approached him, was now quite gone ; our love seemed to me no longer an earthly one ; it had become sanctified through my resolve to sacrifice it in the cause of duty. I knew that this was to be the last time that I should ever rest on his dear bosom,

and my heart threatened to break. He bade me be strong, and on no account allow myself to be persuaded to consent to a separation. I gave a listless ear to what he said, as in all the glowing eloquence of passion he built for me golden castles in the air, and sought by the tenderest endearments of love and of fidelity to witch my mind with prospects of a bright future. I held silence about my resolve, as I did not feel myself strong enough to resist his entreaties, to witness the grief that it would cause him. Ah ! my silence deceived him ; and he took as concurrence in his plans what was really a refusal to them, forced from myself at the cost of great anguish. Rapturous indeed was my future to be, as he in glowing colours had pictured it. An unbroken companionship with him would indeed alone have been enough to have made my life a heaven on earth, even had we been forced to spend our days in the most desolate of wastes ! But all the external matters that make life

worth living seemed destined to augment my struggle. Wherever I wished, there should I dwell with him,—*with him*, who in the glowing ardour of his love would for my sake descend from the brilliant height of his position to become a mere private individual; *with him*, who would raise me to his own rank, generously threatening that on any one's attempting to oppose him, he would sever all ties that bound him to parents, relations, and country, and would devote himself to me alone for the rest of our days; *with him*, whom I loved far better than all else that man deems holy! Oh, how sweet and alluring was this thought! what ravishing images floated before my dazzled sight, as I dreamt that we were free from all the fetters that we strove to loosen; I *with him* in the loveliest spot on earth, his faithful, loving wife! But this delightful dream of a life of joy only immeasurably heightened the bitterness of parting.

In silent emotion I had let him rave on

in hope, a hope which deceitfully promised him a bright future. I could not shatter the vain illusions, to which he clung so firmly in these fearful moments. At length the hour struck when he must leave me, and my father and Dutton entered. The dull chimes seemed like the notes of a death-bell, booming the knell of some last light of love to which a night of bitter sacrifice is to succeed. It seemed as if my father and Dutton were in long mourning robes, as if they had come to celebrate my funeral. Once again my eye rested in mournful ecstasy upon William's divine form, and under the tears that dimmed it, it strove to grave its very soul upon the lineaments of his picture, as those of a saint whom the pious humbly worship. How nobly he stood there before me! Oh! thus do I still see him in my waking dreams, when memory once more puts the treasure before me which the past eternally holds fast, and which it can never cede to me again. So will

he yet stand before me, his head encircled by a halo of love; and when my heart shall break in death, with my last glance I shall look to find him there at the side of my children.

It was with the greatest effort that I was able to stand, for death was in my heart. With hardly-won composure I responded to his passionate farewell, and lay cold and lifeless within his arms. When I recovered, I clearly saw that there was foreboding in his eye, that all was not quite as it should be; but it was lost in the long embrace of parting. He went; and whilst Dutton, kneeling before me, bathed my hands in tears, *he* turned in the dusky room with a divine smile upon his lips to us, and spread his arms out towards me. I rushed towards him; the order on his breast pressed painfully against my bosom, for his *surtout* was open; and as I raised myself, this star of misfortune blinded me like a fatal lightning-flash in a night of storm. He

clasped me in his arms, pressing his burning lips to mine, and rushed out at the door. And now my inner strength quite gave way, though it had supported me so long and so strangely. I hastened to my room, and as I heard the horses' hoofs grow fainter in the distance, I sank in bitterest tears upon this bed, the witness of so many a heavenly hour. It is past!—this was the only idea my mind could grasp—it is past! you will never see him again. My father found me there lifeless, and carried me to his room. At Brandes' recommendation he left Driburg with me the same night.

In eight days we reached Hanover. Do you remember how you shuddered, how terrified you were, when you saw me again, pale as a corpse? The rest you know. I owe it to you that I am still in life, for you were the first for months to guess the secret lingering fever which attacked me nightly at five o'clock, drawing my father's and Lentin's notice to it.

My thanks to you, dear brother ; yet again let me thank you for having saved me from suicide !

I was to tell you the history of *my heart*, of these last four years. I think I have now done so. Compare what I have told you of Heinrich, his death, of Jettchen, of my second Heinrich—the noble Teubner, of my final illness, and lastly of my affection for Teubner ; compare all this with what I related to you of William and his letter, and you, who know me so well, will then have the most faithful picture of this heart, which remains the same, as *you* know, for ever—and which in glowing passion keeps ever close to the object of its love.

As I do not know what is the purport of William's letter, I must just make one or two remarks about it. Possibly it contains proposals as to my Heinrich. Ah ! *you* know already what the 12th of November has twice cost me, and I know that William's heart will bleed, as

it did for my first child. One part of your letter refers to Jettchen. No, William! no, Ernst! death alone or my husband shall tear her from me. You will approve her union with Teubner, of which I informed you. My soul hangs upon this hope, as its last upon earth; and to its fulfilment is joined the transition to a happier world. Yet I do not wish to be a witness of their union alone, but also of their happy life, the growth of their children, and to see with secret joy the effect of the blessing conferred upon them by my motherly heart. Since fate always wounds me in the most sensitive part, it is not without reason that I fear that the happiness of living with them will not be mine; yet I must bear all in silence, and will gladly sacrifice myself—if only Teubner and Jettchen are happy: there is rest for me in the grave!

Since, then, I deny myself all, I may indeed be allowed to give you one *last*

message to William : tell him that I have solemnly promised, as I once did to him amid burning kisses, never to forget in life or death what he said to me at my bedside on the 8th of November in Dri- burg during the first hour that he was there. I have never broken *my* vow, and that *he* has not forgot, I know. You will ask me what it is he said to me? O Ernst! who shall record the utterances of lovers who, having been divided, meet again! Tell him, too, that "as long as human feeling and the power of memory remain to me, so long will the happy time when I had naught, and wished for naught but his love, float before me as the bright morning of a better world! In life as in death I shall keep the memory of the joys of my love, as a pledge and promise of their renewal." But enough, perhaps, indeed, too much! Good God, kind God, forgive this fevered love, implanted by Thee in the heart of another's wife! Ah, what sharp thorns rend my heart! William's

wish cannot be fulfilled. Oh, no! no! I dare not! Were he again to see lines penned by this hand to him, then has this heart ceased to beat—and to suffer; then am I in heaven—spotless and cleansed from guilt—and I speak to him then for the last, the very last time! If I should die, dear Ernst, before I again see you, you will receive from my beloved Teubner, from my son and friend, all the papers that you wish to have, and also my last words of farewell to you and to William. Till then, looking to the northern sky, my gaze shall still in fancy often wander in the direction of Albion.

Caroline to Prince William of Clarence.

In the year 1795.

So you were forced to break your holy promise to my honoured mother—were forced once more to rend open all the wounds of my heart, that poor heart in which *you will for ever dwell!* Here I give you my confession, here you have the truth; but, at the same time, hear my fixed and unalterable resolution, which death alone, and no other power on earth can change. What Ernst wrote to you is true, and when you read this I shall already be the wife of another. Perhaps I should not have acted so hastily, but your letter tells me that I may not delay.

The man who saved my life, and to whom I now dedicate it, loves me with a passion that would equal yours, if anything

ever could come up to *our* love. His life would be for ever miserable were I to refuse to become his. He is noble, honest, good, though without the power and the strength, without the fire of the William whom I have lost ; he is not the *hero* that you are, to use the word in its most beautiful sense. Without me, he is lost ; with me as his wife, I save him for the world, for his relations, for virtue. Yes, 'tis true that he has kindled a spark in my heart. I love him with the deepest friendship, and am prepared to forego all the trifles which the world calls happiness for his sake. O William ! how can you taunt me with family pride ? You cannot think that that would prevent me from doing what I felt to be right ! Are the heart and the mind of your Caroline already so forgotten by you ? What is it after all that I sacrifice for this man, for whom I am about to live ? Was I not much farther below you in rank than he is below me ? and, ah ! do you not remember

how difficult for me it once was to comfort you, and dry your hot tears, when I again fastened round you the blue ribbon which you had torn off, and called you “royal prince”? Was it not your wish never to wear it more? were you not anxious to betray our secret to the whole world? Did you not really appear that evening at court (it was the 3rd of May) with that badge of your royal birth, and had not my father to refuse you access to me, when you would not do as I begged you? But away, away, from that paradise, the gate of which I myself closed!

Three long, terribly long years have I suffered, as seldom man suffered; you know it, and you ought to have known it without having had me watched: that you did so, could not escape me, for Dutton, with his melancholy penetrating look, dogged me like my shadow, yet he never mentioned your name, as I often feared—wished that he would. People thought for a long time that he himself sought my

love, and I rejoiced at their delusion, for the noble fellow kept off other suitors. Dutton read my very soul, and my outward behaviour never deceived him; but he seemed to nourish and add to my anguish, for I knew of his love for you, and I saw how his dark eye grew daily sadder.

At last my health broke down under my intense suffering, and I stood on the brink of the longed-for grave. By dint of ceaseless care, however, I was saved, and now I feel deeply that I should do wrong, that I should no longer be worthy of you, were I to neglect all my present duties for the sake of my sorrow. H—— had not previously deceived you. I *did* want to follow the desires of my parents, and give my hand to Count S——; but each time he approached me and begged my definite consent, I shuddered and drew back. My shattered health always afforded me an excuse.

Although my father behaved very nobly, I

yet perceived that his action was influenced by those in England, who wished me to marry. This mistrust exasperated me ; and I wavered more and more. My doctor decided me in the matter. By his side, at his hand, the hand that snatched me from the grave, would I pass through life (oh ! if he knew how mournful a gift is that life which he restored to me !). I would seek to add sweetness to his ; and as for us, I shall thus make all retreat, all harmful neglect of our most sacred duties for ever impossible. It is not for me to say which of us two will suffer the more. Never again—perchance, long hence—will you hear from me ; I am dead to you, and would remain so. Your destiny will be the easier now that I force you to look upon me as *irretrievably lost*, and therefore, husband of my eternal, my only love, let a sacrifice be now made for you, the greatness of which you, and you only can realize. I know that the moment you have read this letter you will take refuge in Ernst ; therefore, I to-day sepa-

rate myself from him also, from my dear trusted brother, the witness of our nameless bliss. Nothing shall he hear from me, nothing know of me ; and for a time, alas ! perhaps for ever, let all the bonds that chained me to my former life be broken. May you both be of mutual comfort to each other ; for William's sake I will stand alone, abandoning to Fate this wounded heart of mine, which, though it bleed, shall gain for others happiness. Only thus can you recover—only thus, even if it take years, can you become happy and make others happy—only when all hope has vanished, when all possibility has gone of your ever being mine again. . . . My trembling betrays me. William, William, what is it that I pledge myself to do ? Oh ! may a curse come down on me if I end not victorious, if I make not Meineke happy ! Shall two be sacrificed ? No ! that were overmuch. But forget, forget each other ? that we can never do ! Even the strictest morality dare not ask *that* of us. No,

William ; no, noblest of men, never can you forget the wife of your soul ; our love is immortal, as immortal as its purity ; it can never end ; and if there is bliss hereafter—if there is a God in heaven, we shall there meet again ; and then, William, our suffering shall cease !

My future husband knows of my love, yet he is ignorant of the object of it. Our secret, indeed, seemed only a secret because we ourselves never disclosed it ; the world spoke loudly enough of what our glances hourly betrayed. But Meineke's position was too far removed from mine, and he lived at too great a distance from the scenes of our blissful love to gain more than a general outline of it. Never, never shall I in his presence utter the loved name that you so often kissed away from my lips.

O William, let me then once more part from you thus ! The bond by which our hearts are knit can ne'er be rent ; yet in this world we are for ever parted.

These last three years—perhaps they are not altogether the most terrible of my life, for I could hourly be with you in thought. I could long for death, and could seek it. Now all is changed ; Duty calls me, and I must, I will do her bidding. Dark and dreary seems to me my future path ; nameless is the pain with which I part from you ; but I must rely upon my own strength, and no note of anguish shall scare me. Beloved husband,—I may yet once call you thus,—realize how Caroline loves you, feel it by what she thus sacrifices for you, and ask yourself whence she could have got this power, if love had not given it to her. Spirituality and love can alone—— But in an hour the messenger is to start—in one hour ! O William, now indeed can I feel the terror of the sinner on the day of judgment ! now I know what it is to die, for now, now only, am I actually to part from you.

With burning, quivering lips have I just kissed your picture, the picture which

you used so often in those blissful hours to rob of its kisses, when I grew playfully wrath with the original. God! in what thoughts do I lose myself!

There is yet one thing that I would say to you before I end. I know it, and with the greatest certainty, too—even were I not so well acquainted with your affairs—that you would openly recognise me as your beloved wife in the face of the whole world, and would defy Fate when in my arms, thus making me happy, blessed. I know well all that you could yet do, all that is open to you. 'Tis not fear, and assuredly not self-interest, that makes me act as I act. To convince you of this, I send you a letter I received from your uncle, the worthy Duke of Gloucester, in the spring. Your wretchedness touched him, and he tried to persuade me to make me unsay my renouncement. You will see in what glowing colours he paints the happiness he enjoys at the side of his Marie, the daughter of Sir Horace Walpole. But

this very letter of his strengthened my resolve never again to become yours, for it showed me what sacrifices the Duke was called upon to make before he could obtain peace with a wife beneath him in rank. And I, a German, a foreigner ; you, you, the justly beloved son of a king, the hope of a nation : you, the possible inheritor of a throne—but let me,—let me hold my peace ! The sacrifice is offered with my blood, with my whole life-happiness !

Your station is too lofty ; you can scarcely hide yourself from my sight, even though I be buried in the deepest solitude. Grant me but this one joy, that I may always see that even in this world our love has not been lost. All that it has awakened in you, that let it ripen. All the nobler aims it has given you, all the good that you have done, that remains ; nothing can thwart the influence of our souls. Continue in the path that we have trodden ; here, take my hand ; that which is your road is mine also. Let our

thought and work be for the good of mankind, you in your lofty station, I in my own narrow circle. Along the tangled highway of life we shall never see each other more, and yet we are near to one another. How much will you not have power to do! Oh! let my recompence be in the thought that through your good deeds we are made one.

The sole comfort that I allow myself is to keep back your picture, which on the memorable 21st of August you pressed, in a long embrace, upon my breast, after the blessing had been said, the blessing that was to have united us inseparably, as we fondly, foolishly imagined. Only one such moment can there be in a lifetime ;—it has been ours, so let us not complain! But once again, and for the last time, let me thank you for all the blessed joy you have given me;—it lasted nigh eighteen months! But I must be calm and tranquil! The grave itself shall not part me from that beloved picture. Its simple setting and

its double case guards it from discovery, will deceive every one into whose hands it might perchance fall; yet even that cannot happen, for it will ever rest upon the heart on which William himself laid it, the heart in which his memory can never die. I shall but seldom look upon it, for it is my will to lead my husband through life in peace and gladness; he shall never feel that he was not my first love; and happiness shall be his. The duties that I have to perform are sacred ones; and faithfully, honestly, and with all my power I mean to fulfil them; but an angel shall go with me along my rugged path, to stay me in my weakness, to comfort me in my sadness—your picture your lock of hair, hidden from all eyes, these shall be to me as the holiest of relics.

And now I am renouncing all claim to happiness—am to live only for and in another. I quit the scene, and am from to-day dead to you! Adieu! husband of my only, my undying love. William,

brother, husband, friend—O there is no
name for you such as my heart speaks it!
William, nothing can divide our souls;
but this is the last time, O God ! for the
very last time, that I may say it to you !

CAROLINE.

Prince William to Caroline.

In the year 1795.

I have received an answer from Ernst—only a few death-cold words, which he, fully expecting to die, pencils to me from the outposts at Valenciennes. In the hope that the news I received was false, I inquired of our faithful, true brother, alike yours and mine. “She is resolved,” he writes, “not to sacrifice herself to a *mariage de convenance*, but to bestow her hand upon the man who saved her life—the only man who, after her loss of you, can kindle her heart, and who loves her with a passion second only to yours.” “*She is resolved*,” he says, he who alone knows you better than any one, except your William, and I know what that means. I rave, I tremble, am again the

William I was before I knew you. You do not love that man. Three years cannot kill such a love as yours. It is only your feeling of gratitude, the wish not to make two men wretched. You forget my misery. Is it possible for you to do that? Think how incensed will be your relatives and your countrymen; let me tear you hence.

I gave my word not to write to you; do not reproach me, for I do not break it to-day, as my pledge was not given for a case so unparalleled as is this. At my hand lies your renouncement, that terrible proof of your unexampled love for me; before me lies your letter to my mother, written three years ago; and am I to believe that to-day you love another? He has kindled your heart? Warmth of affection! fire! Loudly, loudly do I scoff at them! Affection satisfy *you*? Wife surpassed by none, wife that alone filled, and will for ever fill my heart, wife with a soul of fire,

you love for eternity; and only William, only your earliest love, can suffice for you. Or do you wish—horrible, hideous thought!—to make it impossible for me ever again to belong to you? I am yours, yours alone, and no god, no devil can part me from you.

I hold as sacred the word that I, led only by you, gave to your sorrowing parents; but it was only conditional; you have it in your power to annul it, and all can yet be as it was. The nation that loved me formerly, now adores me; my brother is in my power, and this isle is not my world, if it do not worship you as I do. Even better than before can we now attain our desires—*our*, *our* desires, I say, for, wife of my youth, they are still yours as well as mine. You have your father's leave, you are free to act as you like. Think of the solemn and holy occasion on which he gave it; think of the rapture with which we embraced. Even now I feel the throbs of your beat-

ing heart against this breast, which still retains your dear image, and keeps the lock of hair that I took from you at that moment. No! you are and remain mine—from pure generosity you will yield yourself, as you know what unfortunate love means. I scoffed at G——, who brought me the news that Count S—— was awaiting your acceptance of him : you would not have sacrificed yourself *pour les convenances*, or had you done so, it would have been in the hope that you would have sacrificed yourself for your William before it took place, and on the wedding-day I should have led you home in triumph, and you would have become mine once again. No further barrier for us then. But now, your heart, my property, is it given to another? From you alone will I learn all, from your lips hear the truth; *you* cannot deceive me. If you do not write, nothing shall hold, nothing bind me. I shall come and tear you from the altar; and who will dare to rob me of my

wife? My feelings and my dread are stifling me! What were your words as I read that grand passage in Fordyce to you, which seemed so to carry you away? Did you not say that your love for me had fired you with a courage and a strength that nothing could overcome? and did not your kiss, your eyes, which spoke more eloquently than your lips, tell me yet more? Yes, sweet rebellious one, you *have* shown the courage and strength of a hero by your renouncement of him whom you loved as no wife ever loved before, him whose happiness you were made to believe you marred, though in your innermost heart you must have felt this could not be.

Do you recollect the night in Pymont when I gave the ball, and when your father, your brother, we two, and the few nobles that were among the company stole away to the mountain to watch the sun rise? Blessings on the noble old man, who did not mistrust us, and left us alone

together! I will gladly bear the torments of hell, if I may only ever keep the recollection of this night. You will remember how I finally succeeded in obtaining from you your promise that Parsons should unite us on my approaching birthday; how every eye in heaven seemed to rejoice at our happiness—you said to me that the angels had drawn aside the veil of heaven, and had brought down bliss to you; how my rapture nigh killed me, so that I never even saw that the sun had risen; how I did not hear Ernst's voice calling to me; how I could not tear myself from your sweet lips, would not let loose your hand from mine. . . . Did you think then that *I* would e'er stoop to obtain a trifle, and barter your love, for which a thousand worlds were well lost? And now—yet at this moment I am still your William, yours alone, and in your arms am at all times monarch of the world, though not a king's son. How I shudder! I curse my fortune; yet I will keep myself

worthy of you. Write, write to me ! Send your letter to Ernst, who will give it to the Duke, and I shall receive it safely : the hours are numbered. Your hand—how often has this heart beat under it with love, how often has it pressed mine own in ardent bliss—your hand, I say, alone can give me happiness or misery. I cannot yet grasp the incomprehensible. No, no ! my wife's love is of a kind that lasts for aye ! In the intoxication of our mutual passion we often felt that we had but one heart, one soul, that we were but one being, down to the veriest trifles ; and is it possible that this should have an end ? 'Twas but three months ago that you could still embrace with burning fervour the tree in which I had cut our names, when I solemnly swore to you, my fondly loved, fondly loving maiden wife, to treat you as a sister so long as it was your wish ; 'twas but two months ago that you fell down lifeless at the sudden sight of my portrait, that Dutton held before you ; and now,

you do but try to deceive yourself and me. But I know what all this must end in, and I live once again. Let not this my hope become my executioner—unloose my fetters ; be mine ! or I shall curse even Virtue herself,—shall curse even you, and the sanctity of our love, and the power that your charms have over me ; I shall curse myself that I did not enforce my legal rights with you, that I did not take what was already mine, so that I might never lose it again. O wife, my wife, I am ever yours, never shall another call your William husband.

Caroline to Ernst.

BERLIN, *3rd May*, 1806.

What is it that you ask of me, Ernst, dearest? Have you then no thorough knowledge of this loving, suffering heart? I once wrote to you that time and age could do naught against me in anything that touched my love. And to my misfortune, this saying of mine has proved true. Still, Ernst, would it not be better that I should break off here; but no, you are right, the need yet once again to pour forth this heart *is* an urgent one. When you were here I was silent; I knew that I could keep no bounds; I felt, too, that you could get my meaning without the use of words. I am proud that you should tell me what William said of me when you and he were first alone together; yet it

had no novelty for me. My heart knows it, and there is need of no further word from his noble lips to tell me that he loves me and loves me eternally ; and he knows too that even when in the arms of another I am his for evermore. If you have ever doubted this, oh ! then you did not grasp the nature of our love.

There is a part in your letter which I could not quite understand. For me he is neither prince nor admiral, but simply William, the noble one, the sole one of my love. So then let me confess to you, Ernst, that I love him now, even to-day ; and that even to-day I am still unhappy. But I appoint you, too, as a judge of my actions. The promise given by me to Meineke at the altar, when I swore to make him happy, has it been broken ? You have lived with us, you know how open in character Meineke is : could he or would he have chosen to conceal from you that his happiness was not wholly unmixed with sorrow ? Is it

likely that he thinks that there is some other passion which saps the root of all my peace in life? Can he possibly believe that a perpetual grief is gnawing at my heart? The soothing consolation is mine that I have never neglected any one of my duties, but that I have performed them with such faithfulness and such care as would have done honour even to a wife who *loved* her husband. To *you* I may tell this without your charging me with vanity; yet, Ernst, how great was the effort it cost me! how often had I to gain support from the thought, "By this you are now only making yourself worthy of him, the excellent, the matchless!" How often did I draw courage from that talisman, his picture! He showed you, did he not, the one of me that he wears on his breast? Have I once been fearful that it would ever forfeit that place of keeping? Than I, perhaps, no mother has ever said it with greater truth that her life lies in that of her children. Yes, Ernst, it is in you only

that I live ! To see Meineke, whose feelings, good and kind though he is, are yet not wholly shared in by me ; to see him, I say, happy and contented ; to bring up my darling children in such a way that they may be worthy to rank as William's offspring ; to contribute to the well-being of others ; this, this is the sole joy which can now be mine. All else I lost with him, *eternally and for ever*. That strength of soul, that deep sense of right-doing and of duty which at so early an age my beloved mother aroused in me, it was that only which served to sustain me through these long years of grieving, so that with cutting anguish at my heart I could bravely and cheerfully complete tasks that were even heavier than I had imagined. The only duties which I find sweet and pleasurable are those that my children require at my hands ; my children, these precious gifts of fate. How much happiness have the dear creatures given to you, and how often you were wont to weep as you took

my darling, darling Heinrich to your arms !

During the time that you were with us, I carefully avoided discussing a subject that to you was of such apparent importance ; I well saw what an impression Heinrich made upon you, and this was the only time in which I might have betrayed myself to Meineke and laid myself open to his lifelong reproaches.

When Heinrich came in and ran up to you, saying, " Oh, so you are mama's brother ! " instead of returning his kisses, you gazed intently at him, and exclaimed, " And you, you are my sister's son ! " And then you fell upon my neck—Ernst, Ernst, even to-day I feel your burning tears !—but I had to seem calm, for Meineke and the children were looking on in perplexity at this strange scene. And afterwards, how often did you glance inquiringly at me and at Heinrich, yet my lips could frame no answer ! It was when he was three years old that I first began

to notice this extraordinary resemblance. Then a painful affection of the eyes disfigured him for more than a year, but as he grew better again, this likeness so increased that it has now passed into actual reality ; it is discernible not only in every feature, but in his hair, his eyes, in his whole person ; that warm, loving, sympathising heart, is not that his as well ? I can never bring myself to say that I love him more than I do Jettchen, though my heart often accuses me of it ; still, speaking truthfully, and as you would know me to speak, I can assure you that he has been my favourite ever since he was born. I often ask myself how it is that in Jette there is none of this resemblance, as her birth occurred full fifteen months earlier than his. I often press him to my breast in a paroxysm of grief ; I often think that he must have been sent to reward me for my faithful endurance of the trials of duty ; his embrace is to me as William's was—yet enough ! The darling boy is my joy, my

pride ; and he and Jettchen are alone able to make me momentarily forget that life is a gloomy mystery full of conflicting elements.

So I am to tell you whether I should have been perfectly happy with Meineke if I had never known William? I believe—well no, Ernst dear, I believe that in that case I should never have become his. I have a respect, an affection for Meineke as a friend ; he has many excellent qualities, and is in every sense thoroughly high-minded and true in character, but there is an inequality in our sympathies ; and even without William my position as his wife would have been an isolated one. That he has feeling, you know ; yet his soul is always more swayed by emotion than penetrated by it. He often wounds me without so much as dreaming that he does so ; for you are aware how much he now loves and treasures me—but *understand* me, that he seldom or never does. Just when this heart of mine would fain open itself to him,

he roughly keeps it back. To him happiness and enjoyment are essential, and to me, too ; yet he looks to find it more outside himself, and calls me an enthusiast for maintaining that circumstances should be so used and moulded by us, that we may gain from them both happiness and enjoyment. He often cavils at Fate because he is unable to make my life one of peace and comfort, and because so much is absent from it that was once there : he dreads that the comparison may serve to deprive him of my love. This single trait will show you how totally he misunderstands me. He would always like to see me in good spirits and merry, and often sacrifices himself in order to get me a pleasure that I look upon as simply unendurable. Of this you had an instance when you were here. You remember how that precious evening was spoilt for me, to which both of us and even the children had looked forward with such pleasure. In a society where all was merry, we had to be merry too ; and yet

we longed to be away among ourselves, imbibing our fill of that calm and rest which after sudden storm comes so tenderly and soothingly to all of us in life. It is at such times that I have to struggle hardest with myself in order never to let him see traces of ill humour or chagrin, nor to mar his pleasure at any time. This would be cruel ; and to myself I must often be that. You know my hatred of all dissimulation ; yet had I not been early obliged to learn how to hide my inmost feelings from the world, certainly by showing them I should often have made my good humoured Meineke unhappy. In this respect, however, I have never been the means of spoiling any pleasure for him. This is my recompense ; and this let it ever remain.

My Jette and my Heinrich, oh ! they understand their mother's heart a thousand times better ; indeed I am often terrified at their excess of sympathy. Yes, Ernst, it terrifies me. Oh, only think if their lot

should ever be such as mine! With all her deep and excitable sensibilities, Jettchen's mind has a somewhat masculine stamp; and Henry shows signs of a power, which side by side with a heart so tender, would seem incredible to me, had I not already had evidence of it in William. May I be enabled so to bring them up that they may neither become over-buoyed by happiness, nor fall too low through misfortune! Without stifling their feelings, I shall seek to temper, to equalize their emotions; and with each of them this will be a hard task. In the hour of misfortune it is only the power that we ourselves possess that can sustain us. Then, when it comes for them to grapple with the ills of life, it will be their own individual strength that they will bring to the encounter. They shall remain independent beings, able to keep and hold their better self in the stream of life, not being led hither and thither by this or that opinion. Oh I think and care only for them! My life is of little significance, a

burden at times hardly to be borne ; but I tremble at the thought of losing it before my beloved ones are able to stand alone. Yet do not think that I am afraid that Meineke would not show them all a father's care ; but them, too, he misunderstands ; he spoils them by strictness, by kindness, by alternate coldness and tenderness ; and this, too, serves to sadden many an hour of my life. His latest complaint against me was that I am so ridiculously vain as to pretend to know everything better than any one else : this ought not to pain me, for if my good Meineke misunderstands me, how is he to help it ? Oh, the thorns in my life-path are many indeed ; and believe me, Ernst, it needs not a little effort to keep to the right way. You so often praise me for my knowledge, and for my mental culture, and are surprised that I could have been so busy and active, when within there lay the agony of hidden anguish which devoured my inmost heart. What think you, my dear boy, would have become of

me had I not, by employing my intellect, endeavoured to keep my mind at an even balance? How deserving of blame should I be were I to hinder the influence that still results from our excellent bringing up! Tasks such as these, Ernst dearest, are only a source of joy to me: it is the simple, the unpleasant everyday household duties which often weigh your poor Caroline down; yet, excepting where my strength fails me, I never allow myself to neglect anything however slight; the effort costs me a deal, but I take a pride in making it just for that reason. I was very pleased at Meineke's telling you that since our marriage he had not spent a farthing upon the knitting or sewing of anything for his family or for himself; and that by having just one maidservant, I have saved him much daily expense. How glad I am that he has never found out at what cost I have earned myself this praise; for he—in all respects he—must be happy; he must imagine me to be so, too.

This is already the third time since you have been in England, that you ask me for Heinrich's portrait and my own. Why is this, dearest boy? You have twice had a portrait of me, painted by Ramberg and Ridley, the one showing a gleam of happiness in the face, the other expressive of deep sorrow. When you were last here, you found the latter so like, that you would not change it for the picture done by Heusinger. Why should you want to do so now?

Of Heinrich you write, that he is "beautiful as the day," and that you must have his portrait. You are fond of both the children, and if Jettchen has not all her brother's beauty, she is nevertheless a very pretty child; yet you do not ask to have her picture. It pains me to have to deny you this request, my own dear good Ernst, but as I have found you out, I am forced to do so. Would you know if this is easy for me? Oh, it was not granted to me to make *him* happy, the one whose picture

shall never fade from my memory and my heart so long as the life-blood runs yet in my veins and my spirit yet keeps its sensibility. Yet that which I might achieve in adding to his happiness, that I may not do! Fate ordains that he is to be happy without me; otherwise why should I have sacrificed myself? You ask so solemnly if I will not trust the boy to you for a time? to no one sooner than to you—but—not for some years to come, when he shall have become a youth and can do without his mother's guiding hand. Then do *you* take my place, but for a time only—you must give him back to me. My life is bound up in him. Should I die before this time, I will see that Meineke fulfils my promise. You tell me I am hard! Not so; 'tis duty, which I have to obey, that is hard. Do you know a single case in which I voluntarily altered a resolve once taken? And should I do it here, where the happiness of several is involved? You also ask if I can make up

my mind to separate myself from Heinrich and only see him occasionally? At that age, yes; but not before—and even then it would pain me deeply to lose him; but the thought that by entrusting him to the care of two of the noblest of men, I was laying the foundations of his lasting happiness, would make me reconciled to the separation. Were I to die before this, then I know that Meineke will act in accordance with our mutual wish. Then let William but see that he and he only had possession of my heart, that—ah! but this he knows already! Heinrich, whom I named after him, let him be my legacy! This confusing resemblance will pain him; it will be good for him. I quite understand that passage in your letter, I know what Caroline's son will be to him, and need no assurance to convince me of it; but for the present I will not part with Heinrich; for the present there shall be no new bond between the ever-loved one and myself, whom my heart yet loves, oh, all too passionately!

Why was it, Ernst mine own, that you told William about my Heinrich? Why did you add fresh fuel to the flame of this our unfortunate passion which the years have been powerless to quench? Twelve years! seemingly a long time this, yet what was it for our love, for the love of which you were a witness? Knew you not that it was eternal? Did you not thoroughly divine my faithful one's thoughts, who was there to await your arrival at Plymouth dock, and when he could no longer speak to you without witnesses, he thus passionately exclaimed, "Ernst, yonder in Germany this selfsame moon is shining; its light falls upon two miserable beings whom now the seas divide, and yet at one time it shone upon their bliss!" Ernst, my darling one, be not so cruelly tender to him! Of what good use are my years of martyrdom if without me he be not at least content?

O God! how gladly would I forfeit all happiness if only he might be benefited thereby!

Difficulties have begun to be made about sending letters to England ; there is a general preparation for war. Am I once more to live wholly separated from you ? am I again to stand quite alone, finding no faithful heart to share my griefs ? am I again to know that you and William are in peril on the raging main ? Poor, poor Caroline ! Must Fate still track my footsteps ? O Ernst, whence shall I gain courage who am once more left quite uncared for and alone ? Dearest, dearest children, it is with you that your mother seeks refuge. You are all in all to her ; it will be my joy to bring you up ; you shall comfort and strengthen me, but my secret must ever remain a secret for you ; you may never know how unspeakably wretched was your mother ! Answer this soon, Ernst dear, and write to me when you can, of the state of the political horizon, and whether I shall yet be as unhappy as I fear. Your letters always reach me soonest if sent through Hamburg.

Adieu, dearest brother! all parting is painful to me, even in a letter. I bring this to a hasty close, in order not to add anything to it that I should not, would not add. A hearty embrace to Martin, who owes me a letter. Is he still in London, or again at Weymouth?

May you be happy; you so thoroughly deserve to be that!

Your

Caroline.

Tell Dutton, in lieu of all other answer, that his friendship cost me tears of joy, and that he forms one of the trio in question that I most honour and love, William, Ernst, Dutton—kings among men that you are! I am so near to you all, and yet so far! O Ernst! Ernst! Yet peace! Farewell!

THE END.

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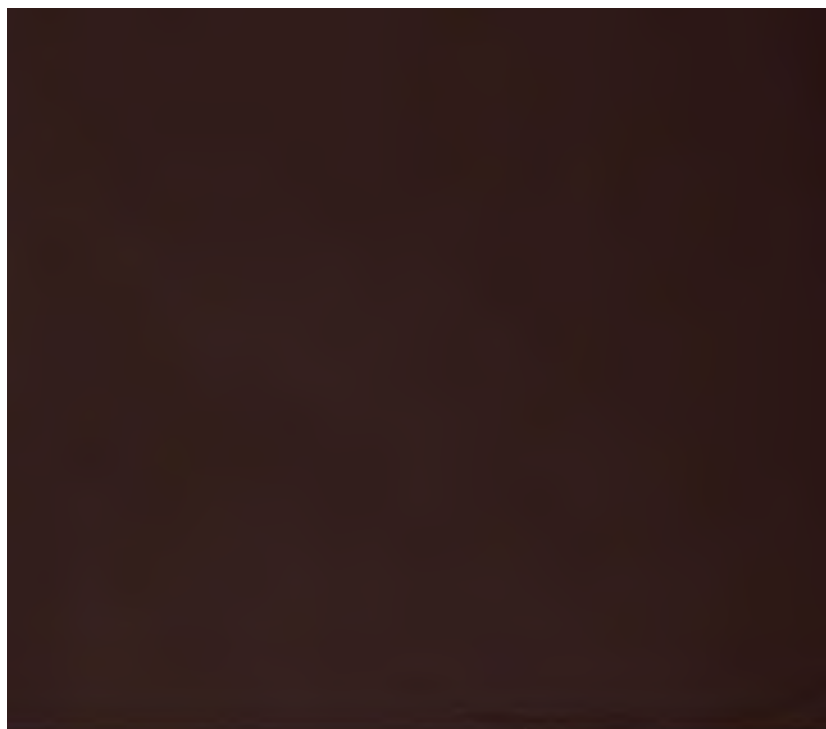
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